

INTERNATIONAL

UK teacher sentenced to death

RANGOON, Dec 28. (AP): A Burmese court today convicted a British teacher and his Burmese cook of murdering the teacher's wife and sentenced both to death.

Thomas Andrew Kirkpatrick, 38, of Suffolk, wept as the Insein township court passed judgment.

The court said Kirkpatrick's cook, 42-year-old Saw William, carried out the Briton's request to kill Lynn Kirkpatrick and set fire to her body. Her remains were found in the couple's home in a wealthy Rangoon suburb.

Saw William had stated that he suffocated Mrs Kirkpatrick with a pillow and set her body and the bedroom ablaze at Kirkpatrick's request because Mrs Kirkpatrick was interfering in her husband's affair with a British woman.

However, he later retracted the statement and said it had been made under police coercion.

The woman, identified only as "Miss Helen," testified that she did have an affair with Kirkpatrick. The woman, an English teacher at the foreign language institute in Rangoon, has returned to England.

Mrs Kirkpatrick, a Malaysian-born British citizen, died only two weeks after she and the couple's child arrived in Rangoon to join Kirkpatrick, who taught English at Rangoon's institute of education.

Afghan rebels deny Khost siege broken

ISLAMABAD, Dec 28. (AP): Afghan rebels have refuted the Kabul government claims to have reopened the strategic road leading to the northeastern city of Khost, where Afghan forces are besieged by guerrillas.

The guerrillas said Soviet paratroopers who had landed in Khost four days ago are trapped there along with 20,000 Afghan troops.

Meanwhile, the official Soviet news agency Tass quoted an Afghan official as saying that an American adviser had been killed in fighting in the Khost area.

The road runs 115 kilometres from the provincial capital of Gardez to Khost on the Pakistani border.

"We inform our compatriots that the security of the road from Gardez to Khost has been ensured. The road is open for normal traffic," Kabul Radio quoted Minister of Tribes and Nationalities Solayman Laeq as saying last night.

Denial
The people of the Zadran region, through which the road runs, had refused to enter discussions with the government about reopening the road last month.

"After all these peaceful measures by the local authorities using local means, steps were

taken to ensure peace in the Zadran region," Laeq said. He did not elaborate.

Guerrilla official Abdul Rahim denied the radio report and said the guerrillas were becoming more organised and were resisting well.

He said up to 1,500 Soviet paratroopers were trapped in Khost after landing there four days ago and that heavy fighting was raging in Sata Kandao to the north and in Marjan Dukan to the south.

Calls for a withdrawal of Soviet troops that entered Afghanistan Dec 27, 1979, were echoed in the United States, India, Pakistan, Japan, Germany and Britain Sunday, but Moscow was silent over what has become popularly called the Soviet Union's Vietnam war.

Occupation

In the Iranian city of Isfahan, several Afghans were injured and arrested Sunday when they stormed the Soviet consulate, the official Islamic Republic News Agency said. Moscow lodged an official protest of the assault in which several security personnel were hurt and claimed the consulate was damaged.

Agency Afghan Press said guerrillas carried out raids throughout Afghanistan and cut power lines in Kabul.

President Reagan called on

Moscow to "end once and for all its brutal occupation."

Reagan assailed the Soviet invasion as "an unprovoked and blatant affront to both human decency and international law" and declared "the Afghan people will not be conquered."

Washington backs the Afghan guerrillas with millions of dollars in military aid.

"Afghanistan is (an) important test of Soviet good faith," British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe said. "We in the European Economic Community and the rest of the world look to the Soviet Union to withdraw all their troops in 1988 according to an agreed timetable. Only this can end the misery of Afghanistan."

"The Soviet leadership can be happy the war crimes laws they helped draft at Nuremberg won't be applied to them," said Juergen Todenhoefer, a political ally of West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and visitor to Afghanistan in 1980 and 1984.

"Mikhail Gorbachev talks a lot about peace, but even under Gorbachev, Afghanistan is a hell," he said.

The Tasua ceremonies are held at a different time each year to mark the martyrdom of the Imam Hussein.

Iranian bomber executed

NICOSIA, Dec 28. (AP): An Iranian convicted of planting bombs in Tehran and spying for Iraq was publicly executed yesterday on a street, site of a 1985 explosion, Tehran Radio said.

The death sentence was carried out in the afternoon in Tehran's Hashemi Avenue, the scene of an explosion two years ago, said the radio, monitored in Nicosia. It did not disclose how he was executed.

Ali Baba Moradi, a native of Marivan, western Iran, was tried by the Islamic revolutionary court in Tehran, which found him "guilty of planting bombs in Tehran which killed many people."

He has been accused of "membership of a bombing network affiliated with the intelligence organisation of the Iraqi regime, transporting of bombs and explosives from Iraq to Iran, and helping to set off bombs during the Tasua ceremonies in 1985 as well as in other parts of Tehran which killed or injured a large number of innocent people," the radio said.

The Tasua ceremonies are held at a different time each year to mark the martyrdom of the Imam Hussein.



A man in Little Rock, Arkansas, trying to retrieve some possessions from his house using a boat. (Reuter radiophoto)

Snowstorm kills 13 in US Midwest

NEW YORK, Dec 28. (AP): A slow-moving storm blamed for at least 13 deaths buried the Midwest with snow today as it headed east after snarling holiday traffic and keeping thousands of Arkansas and Tennessee residents from flood-ravaged homes.

The storm dumped up to 76 centimetres of snow Sunday on the Western Plains, shutting Denver's airport for the first time since 1983 and closing interstate highways in Wyoming, Oklahoma and Colorado.

"We wanted a white Christmas, but not this white," said Anne Ayres, 27, one of thousands stranded at Denver's Stapleton international airport.

Up to 20 centimetres of snow was expected today in parts of Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota as the storm headed east, prompting coastal storm watches in parts of Virginia, Delaware and Maryland, the National Weather Service said.

At least 18 centimetres had fallen in Manson City, Iowa.

Damage

Authorities in Millington, Tennessee, and nearby West Memphis, Arkansas, ventured into flood-stricken areas Sunday

Death toll rises to 30

Sri Lankan police deny killing civilians

COLOMBO, Dec 28. (Reuter): Police today denied charges that they deliberately killed civilians in a violence-filled weekend in the east of the island which left 30 people dead.

According to an Indian High Commission official on Sunday, police, enraged by the gunning down of a colleague in the Batticaloa market square by Tamil guerrillas, rushed to the town, killed 12 civilians and set fire to a row of shops. A Roman Catholic priest in the town said "they dragged people out of shops and shot them on the market square."

But a police spokesman in Colombo denied the charges, saying most of the civilians died in crossfire. He said his information was based on a report received from the Batticaloa police.

Residents of the town said the death toll rose to 30 with the discovery of more bodies this morning.

After a curfew ended this morning, crowds filled the streets.

"Though life returned to normal in the town, smoke rising from rows of burnt shops was a grim reminder of the disaster."

Bingo Day 14
27 53 65 57

Palestinian government-in-exile

PLO testing world opinion

ABU DHABI, Dec 28. (Agencies): The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is testing world opinion on its setting up a government-in-exile, a senior PLO official said in an interview published in Al Ittihad newspaper today.

"What matters now is world response, whether in Europe, Latin America, Canada or in the Arab, Islamic, and African countries," PLO leader Yasser Arafat's political adviser, Hani Al Hassan, said in the interview he gave in Cairo.

Hani said a special committee on the proposal was exploring possible reactions to the idea and he had raised the issue with some European states during a nine-day tour. He did not name them or say what their reactions were.

Arafat established the PLO committee to consider forming a government-in-exile in the wake of riots in Israeli-occupied territories this month in which at least 22 Palestinians were killed and hundreds more were wounded.

ded or arrested.

"We are now convinced that circumstances have become ripe to set up a government-in-exile," Hassan said.

"We are optimistic ... we have taken into account all possibilities including non-recognition by some countries, especially the United States," he said. "We do not hinge any hope on the US."

Response
Hassan said he discussed the idea with Arab ambassadors in Cairo and with Egyptian officials and added: "Egypt's response was positive."

Al Ittihad said Hassan had flown to Riyadh where the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Arab leaders are meeting. It did not say if he went specifically to sound out opinion on the government-in-exile idea.

He was quoted as saying anti-Israeli protests in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip had proved that "there is a Palestinian

GCC will send envoy to Tehran for talks on war

(Continued from Page 1)

The communiqué praised the popular Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories and hailed the resistance of the Palestinian people to the Israeli terrorism. It called upon the world to stand by and support the struggle of the Palestinians.

It called on the Lebanese people to achieve unity and brotherhood.

The communiqué expresses GCC's total support for the struggle of the Afghan Mujahideen and asked the Soviet Union to respond to international calls and withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. It supported UN efforts to bring about a solution that would ensure the return of all Afghan refugees to their homeland, non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, preservation of its Islamic identity, and Soviet-Afghan relations based on mutual respect.

Warned

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed, said that the results of the summit would strengthen cooperation between GCC states in the military, security and economic fields.

He warned that caution must be used to face the possible dangers faced by all.

He stressed Kuwait is alert to what was going on around it, and added that Kuwait is adhering to its well known principles and would never deviate from them.

He said that all security agencies in the country were intensifying their efforts against terrorists and criminals, whoever they were.

Police disperse Dhaka protesters

(Continued from Page 1)

for new elections," a joint committee of the 21 opposition parties said in a statement today.

Ershad, trying to weather the worst crisis in his nearly six years in power, has said he will not step down under pressure.

Despite current protests, Ershad seems to enjoy wide support from the rural people who credit him with being able to feed the country's 107 million people despite disastrous floods and the persistent political turmoil.

"Maybe he has many lapses and shortcomings," but he still deserves thanks for averting a widely predicted famine, a rural-council chairman said today.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian Patriarch

VATICAN CITY, Dec 28. (Reuter): Pope John Paul has named a Palestinian born in Nazareth, Michel Sabbah, as Latin (Roman Catholic) Patriarch of Jerusalem, the Vatican said today.

An official statement said Sabbah, 54, would replace Italian Giacomo Giuseppe Beltritti, 77, who was retiring due to his age.

The announcement came a week after the Pope called for peace in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Forest fire

BEIJING, Dec 28. (AP): A series of forest fires caused heavy damage in mountainous areas of east China's Anhui province, the Liberation daily newspaper reported.

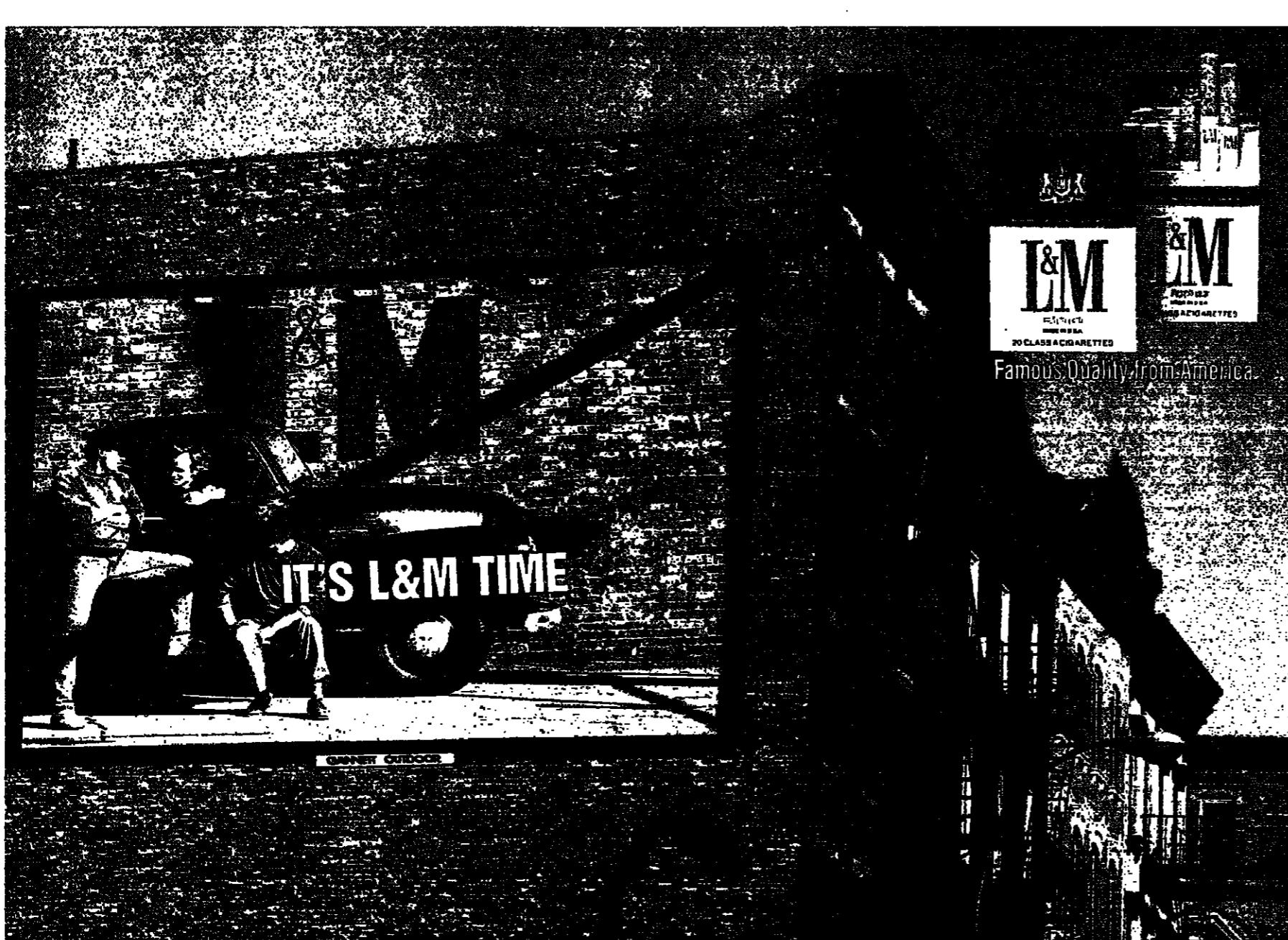
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GOVERNMENT WARNING: SMOKING IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF CANCER AND DISEASES OF THE LUNGS, HEART AND ARTERIES.

KUWAIT . . . GULF

Sheikh Nasser stresses information security

No one will be allowed to fish in troubled waters

THE Minister of Information Sheikh Nasser Mohammed Al Ahmed yesterday stressed that the "information security" forms an important base of the state's information policy.

Speaking to a number of citizens and journalists at his weekly *diwaniya*, which has been newly identified as "citizen day", the minister said the Kuwaiti government, under the guidance of HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah, do not allow anyone to damage interests of the state.

Sheikh Nasser said the government will not allow anyone to "fish in troubled waters" not to touch on the country's security.

The minister hailed the Gulf Cooperation Council states' cooperation in the information field, noting that Kuwait has participated in Bahrain's National Day celebrations within the framework of the two countries' joint information agreement.

The minister, in the meantime, welcomed cooperation between the six GCC member states on their national occasions.

Fund raising

In response to a question Sheikh Nasser said, newspapers will not advertise any fund raising announcement from any quarters unless it carries the written approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour.

Speaking on the French programmes in both radio and

television Sheikh Nasser said those programmes are broadcast in the two TV channels and on the radio's European programme. He added that other foreign movies and programmes including German, Italian and Russian, also have time in Kuwait Television.

The minister said in response to a question that French programmes will not be included in the January session of the TV because of some problems with the French producers that "we hope to be solved soon".

French newspaper

Issuing a French newspaper is a business matter, the minister said, noting that the French newspaper can be seen in Kuwait three days a week.

Sheikh Nasser welcomed Kuwaiti Ambassador to India, Ali Al Ansari who was present at the citizen day meeting yesterday. Al Ansari is an artist as well as a diplomat.

Al Ansari composed a symphony that was broadcast in Kuwait TV last year. Sheikh Nasser in this respect hoped that Al Ansari would compose another one to be added to the Kuwaiti art library.

Encyclopaedia

Radio Kuwait will broadcast as of January first and for an estimated period of five years the entire content of the theology (Fiqh) encyclopaedia which was compiled and published by the State of Kuwait recently.

The broadcast of some 4,000 theology idioms printed in 25 chapters in the encyclopaedia will cover all walks of life in the Muslims in both their private and public activities, Sheikh Nasser said.

In his announcement yesterday, Sheikh Nasser hoped that the service would convey the invaluable knowledge contained in this priceless book to the rank and file of Muslims.

The behaviour of the individual in his daily life should be derived from the true interpretation of the Holy Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet (PBUH) so that he does not fall victim to the superstitions and lies and safeguards himself from diverse trends, the minister said.

Glantz

Sheikh Nasser said that the theology broadcast and the publication of the Islamic encyclopaedia are both giant projects undertaken by the State of Kuwait in pursuance of the deep convictions of HH the Amir and HH the Crown Prince and Premier of their duty toward the Islamic nation.

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The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has been the pioneer in meeting an Islamic need by publishing an Islamic encyclopaedia which has come to be recognised as an authority worldwide, the minister said, hoping that the theology service will render yet a greater service to Muslims.



● Kuwait's Interior Minister, Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmed, yesterday hosted a dinner party at the Kuwait Towers in honour of the Austrian Interior Minister, Karl Blecha. He is seen with the guest of honour during the party.

IICA opens Charity Week in Jahra governorate

THE International Islamic Charity Authority opened its Charity Week in the Jahra governorate on Sunday under the patronage of Jahra Governor Sheikh Salem Sabah Al Naser.

Yousef Al Hajji, chairman of the authority, said in his opening speech that the authority was established to support the poor, the sick, orphans and victims of disaster and hunger in Islamic countries and communities. He added that statistics show that several Islamic countries suffer from poverty, poor health and inadequate educational facilities, with illiteracy reaching as high as 90 in some of these

countries. He explained further that the annual income of individuals in these poverty-stricken countries was about \$100 and the amount spent on medical care per person was estimated to be about one dollar per person annually.

Al Hajji said that the authority is working to collect \$1 billion from Muslims throughout the world to help in training projects which would improve job opportunities for Muslim workers.

Refugees

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Social Reform Society opened its Charity Week for Afghan Mujahideen and refugees to mark the eighth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Abdulla Al Mutawa, the chairman of the society, speaking at the opening said that the invasion was one of the worst colonisation attacks since the Second World War and that the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan aimed at destroying Islam

and Muslims throughout the world.

He added that Muslims in various places throughout the world are facing attacks and attempts to destroy them because the West and the East know that Islam threatens their imperialistic and colonial ambitions. He said that they understand that Islam is a fair system which exposes their false principles and ambitions.

Security gate

Professor Burhul Deen Rabban, the representative of the Afghan Mujahideen and the leader of the Afghanistan Islamic Society, expressed his appreciation to the society for organising the Charity Week and for giving attention to the Afghan problem. He said that Afghanistan is a "security gate" for the whole Islamic world and Arab Gulf in particular.

A photography exhibition is part of the activities planned for the Charity Week.

Anti-smoking Health Day

A SPECIAL committee set up by Kuwait's Health Ministry to plan International Health Day, 1988, celebrations met last week and agreed to have an International Anti-smoking Health Day to be celebrated on April 7, 1988.

The committee will work with the women's and cooperative societies in their anti-smoking campaigns and a contest will be organised for the occasion. The committee also agreed to have slogans which would be printed on envelopes and letters by the Ministry of Communications.

Telex revenue increases

KAMAL Al Zuhair, the controller of Kuwait's international telegrams and telex account at the Ministry of Communications, said that the ministry collected KD7 million in 1980 for telex services and KD8.5 million in 1985. He explained that the increase was because of the improved economic situation in the country and the civil war in Lebanon. He added that the Iraq-Iran war and the Manakh crisis have contributed to lack of more growth.

Al Zuhair said that the ministry has 32 direct telex lines and 19 direct telegram lines.

Reagan-Assad summit planned

A US proposal will be carried soon to Damascus by US Assistant Secretary of State for Mideast Affairs Richard Murphy to see into the possibility of holding a summit between the two countries' presidents, a diplomatic source in Beirut was quoted as saying yesterday.

The source told a Kuwaiti daily that certain obstacles obstruct a meeting between Presidents Reagan and Hafez Assad in either Washington or Damascus.

Because of these problems, the paper noted, the US suggests holding such a summit in Vienna or any other neutral city, similar to what took place between ex-US President Jimmy Carter and Assad in the late 70s.

The source expected President Assad to go along with the US motion simply because Vice-President George Bush is the frontrunner in the fall race to the White House, and that if he wins no change will come upon the current US policy.

Shaheen receives Indian envoy

INDIA'S Ambassador to Kuwait, N.N. Jha, yesterday met the Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, Sulaiman Al Shaheen.

Their conversation included the latest developments in the Gulf.

ROYAL COURT

Amiri cable

HH the Amir yesterday sent a cable of congratulations to the King of Nepal on his country's National Day.

Deputy Amiri audiences

HH the Deputy Amir, Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah yesterday received at his office the Interior Minister, Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmed and the Public Works Minister, Abdul Rahman Al Houti.

Sheikh Saad received Kuwait's permanent representative to the United Nations Ambassador Mohammed Abul Hassan.

Sheikh Saad also received a number of citizens of the public diwan.

KUWAIT PRESS DIGEST

UAE proposal supported

KUWAITI newspaper Al Rai Al Jadid yesterday supported a proposal by United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan that a delegation of heads of Gulf states go to Tehran to negotiate an end to the Gulf war.

"The idea is logical and we have not tried it," the paper said in a front page editorial.

It described the proposal as an integrated plan, which could solve many problems of the region.

President Zayed made the proposal in an interview published Saturday in the Saudi newspaper.

The paper pointed out that the most important thing in the interview was that Sheikh Zayed held the big powers responsible for the crisis in the Gulf region and Middle East.

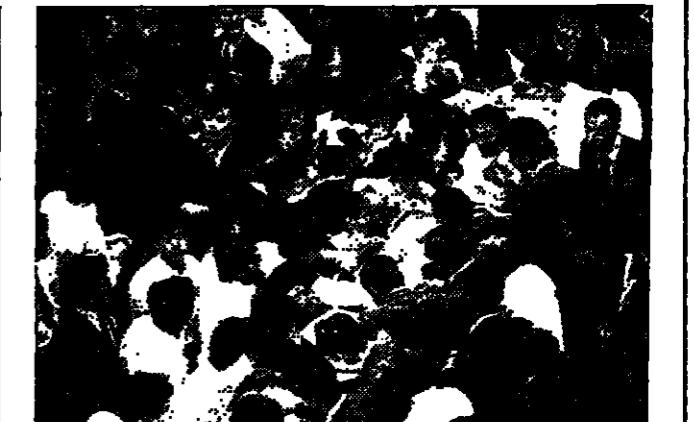


● M M Ramachandran of Alias Jewellery is seen presenting a plaque to the secretary of Moods and Melody orchestra, Radhakrishnan (left), in appreciation of the orchestra's performance at Maidan Hawalli Labour Union Hall recently.



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Mixed reaction to ministry's interference in cooperatives

KUWAIT'S Social Affairs and Labour Ministry recently appointed members to the councils of four cooperative societies, and this action had some supporters and dissenters.

The chairman of Salimiya Cooperative Society, Badr Saif Abed, told a local newspaper that he was against the ministry's action and the ministry did not have the right to interfere with appointments without cause, though it could interfere if the administration was bad or dishonest was discovered. He said that such appointments were at random without considering any standards. If members are appointed then they should be residents of the area.

The deputy chairman of Daiya Cooperative Society Khalifa Abdulla Al Fadala, said the action was a two-edged weapon.

The director general of Khal-

ya Cooperative Society, Abdulla Nasser Al Saad, approved of appointing members, but only at badly organised societies. He said that societies had many problems and the appointments could have a good or bad effect. He said that the ministry should be careful to select well qualified people for appointment. The ministry had a complete file on cooperative problems and was able to deal with them. The decision will solve mistakes and problems at some societies. He said that officials at cooperatives were sensitive about the appointments.

A shareholder of Salimiya Cooperative Society, Ali Salem, said the decision was good for some societies but not for the Salimiya Society because it was administered well.



HH the Amir is seen with King Fahd (left) and Sultan Qaboos (right) during side meetings at the Riyadh summit.

University budget discussed

KUWAIT University's Board of Directors held a meeting recently under the chairmanship of the Education Minister and University Chancellor Anwar Abdullah Al Nouri during which they discussed the draft budget for the 1988-1989 fiscal year and closing accounts for the 1986-1987 fiscal year.

The board agreed to a proposal submitted by the Faculty of Science to grant the Mathematics Department three academic degrees.

The board also agreed to the promotions of Dr Basel Al Naqib and Dr Homammed Mustafa to professors and Dr Sam Sadeq, Dr Maher Marzouk and Dr Yaqoub Maqdesi to associate professors.

NHA plans to reduce waiting time



The office staff receiving citizens

THE head of the public service office at the National Housing Authority (NHA), Ahmad Al Daqbas, said yesterday that the office will post employees in remote areas such as Jahra and Dahr to facilitate completion of application forms.

He said the NHA had adopted modern methods to reduce the waiting time for completing applications.

The NHA was one of the first government establishments to implement the Civil Service Council's decision on setting up

public service offices. Citizens visiting the NHA will be received by special staff to help them in their affairs.

Al Daqbas said the office will place special boxes at cooperative societies to receive complaints and suggestions from citizens.

The office also organises open day meeting with the State Minister for Housing Affairs for citizens.

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HH the Amir in a room of the new embassy building, with (from left): State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashed Al Rashed, Oil Minister Ali Al Khalifa and Finance Minister Jasem Al Khorafi.

Tunisian team discusses technical cooperation

A MEETING between the delegation representing the Tunisian Electricity and Gas Company and a number of officials of the Ministry of Electricity and Water was held yesterday.

An official source of the ministry told Kuna that discussions at the meeting dealt with aspects of technical cooperation and ways of developing relations in that

sector.

The Tunisian delegation then left Kuwait after a few days visit to Kuwait during which a meeting was held with Minister of Electricity and Water Mohamad Abdul Mohsen Al Rifai.

The delegation toured a number of ministry establishments and got acquainted with the work progress there.

Child molester trapped

A FIVE-YEAR old child helped the police to trap an alleged child molester who had earlier invited the child to visit his flat with friends, promising they would have a good time.

The child immediately went to the local police station and reported the proposition he had received, a local newspaper said.

The station commander decided to lay a trap for the suspect with the help of the child and told the child to go with the man while the police kept watch.

The man came to the rendezvous and took the children to

his flat where a friend was waiting.

The police raided the flat shortly after the man and children entered, and arrested the man and his friend.

During the criminal court hearing, the man said he did not invite the child, but the child had propositioned him and that the friend was a new acquaintance.

The court found the man guilty but decided not to sentence him because of his clean record, a belief that he would lead a straight life and out of regard for his family.

The friend was acquitted.

Estimated telephone service revenue

ACCORDING to an official at Kuwait's Communications Ministry the ministry's revenue for October, 1987 totalled KD7.8 million and the total revenue for the fiscal year 1986-1987 from telephone service was estimated at KD67 million.

Seyassah newspaper reported that the ministry depends primarily on cutting telephone services as a means to collect overdue bills from subscribers. The ministry source said that there were 3,000 judgments issued in favour of the ministry on overdue accounts.

Citing the results of laboratory tests, the federal secretariat of UAE municipalities said all brands of cheese on market shelves in the country were fit for human consumption.

Greek envoy

PUBLIC Works Minister Abdul Rahman Al Houti yesterday received at his office newly appointed Greek Ambassador to Kuwait.

The discussions between the two officials tackled means of enhancing bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Aid for West Bank students

BOARD of trustees for the International Foundation to assist Arab students yesterday decided to grant \$200,000 to finance a programme in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

This step aims at developing human resources and upgrade the educational efficiency of the colleges in the occupied lands.

It will also provide a chance for the talented, needy and orphans there to continue their post graduate studies.

The foundation is an independent educational and non-profit making body supervised by a 55-member board of trustees.

People would be received during the morning at the department and at the personal identification department at Hawalli and Al Khaila and also at the Public Authority for Civil Information at Hawalli.

He said people should present a copy of their civil identification card to facilitate re-registration of their fingerprints.

Nouri receives Egyptian envoy

THE Minister of Education, Anwar Al Nouri yesterday received Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Salah Al Deen Hindawi.

During the meeting, they exchanged cordial talks.

Al Nouri toured a number of educational areas.

The Minister was accompanied by education Undersecretary Abdul Rahman Al Khudari and assistant undersecretaries at the ministry.

Fly-over contract

KUWAIT'S Public Works Minister Abdul Rahman Al Houti yesterday signed a KD 12,299,000 contract with a local company to construct a two level fly-over above Al Istqlal highway and the First King road intersection.

The duration of the project is 1,250 days.

They also reviewed progress made in the West Asian travel

A framework for security cooperation

RIYADH, Dec 28, (GNA): The Undersecretary of the Saudi Interior Ministry, Dr Ibrahim Al Awaji, said that the security strategy approved by the GCC leaders at the summit forms the basis of GCC security cooperation.

He told Al Riyadh newspaper that the security cooperation was progressing and was taking several forms, the most important of which was that this strategy would be an essential framework for security cooperation and all its aspects.

The security strategy embodies the presence of a

New premises of Kuwaiti embassy in Riyadh opened

THE new premises of Kuwait's embassy in Riyadh was opened yesterday under the patronage of HH the Amir.

The ceremony was attended by the delegation accompanying the Amir and by local media men.

The Amir was received at the new building by Kuwait's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Abdul Rahman Al Bakr, members of Kuwait's diplomatic mission in Riyadh and a number of Kuwaiti citizens, including students.

Al Bakr told the Seyassah newspaper reporters that it was a great honour that the Amir should attend the opening ceremony and expressed gratitude to the Amir for his fatherly concern and generous support.

He also thanked the Custodian of the two Holy Shrines, King Fahd, for his attention to members of the diplomatic corps.

Gray meets Sheikh Hamad

MANAMA, Dec 28, (AP): US Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Albert Gray arrived today and met Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Gulf news agency reported.

The Crown Prince is commander of Bahrain's Defence Force. The military's Chief of Staff, Gen. Khalifa Bin Ahmad Al Khalifa, also attended the meeting, the agency reported.

The US Navy spokesman in the Gulf was aboard a ship and unreachable for details on Gray's visit.

The commandant is expected to visit Marines involved in the American Navy escort activities in the Gulf. The Marines are administered under the department of the Navy.

American warships are in the Gulf region to protect US flag shipping from attacks related to the Iran-Iraq war.

Pakistan deeply distressed

THE Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohammed Khan Junejo, has said that the government and people of Pakistan were deeply distressed and outraged at the repression and terror against unarmed Palestinians unleashed by Israeli forces in the occupied Arab territories of the West Bank and Gaza.

The Security Council had rightly denounced Israel's brutal measures, and Pakistan urged determined follow-up action to ensure Israel's observance of the council's decisions.

He said that Pakistan will continue to collaborate with all fair-minded countries, especially Islamic ones, in support of the Palestinian struggle for the realisation of justice and peace.

Indian Tourist Office hosts reception



Yugoslav embassy Second Secretary S. Jarcevich (left), A.N. Chaturvedi (second left) and Indian embassy Counsellor, Aish Singh (right) seen at the reception.

INDIAN tourist officials in Kuwait hosted a dinner-reception on Sunday to say goodbye to the old year and herald in the new year. Travel agents, airline officials and those who promoted India as a tourist resort were invited to a 'thank you' reception by the Indian Tourist Office (ITO), Kuwait.

They also reviewed progress made in the West Asian travel

market. The ITO, based in Kuwait, looks after the tourist markets in nearly all countries in the Arab and Gulf region.

Said ITO's Regional Director A.N. Chaturvedi: "Though tourist traffic from Kuwait to India rose by about 30 per cent, some 4401 people travelled in January. The number was 3,755 in August this year."

A special guest at the reception was Anil Bhandari of the Hotel Corporation of India, which owns the Centaur chain of hotels. Bhandari presented a slide show to acquaint travel agents with the facilities on offer.

Events
RESULTS OF ARAB TIMES OPINION POLL
KTV 2 is terrible: viewer's verdict

After a lot of work we are announcing the results of our poll about KTV 2, although KTV 2 will be far from pleased with what readers have to say about their programmes.

Before analysing the survey let us say a few words about the way we looked at the results. All replies were divided up by nationality so that we could see how different nationalities responded to the programmes. In fact, there was a remarkable sense of agreement between every nationality except one — the Filipinos. Everybody else, Kuwaitis, Arabs, Pakistanis, British, Indians, Americans, Europeans, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans, all agree that KTV 2 is terrible.

This devastating result shows that KTV 2 has failed totally to provide the viewers with what they want to see. With such a multi-national audience one would expect that some viewers would be happy, others unhappy, for nearly everyone to agree that KTV 2 is so bad is a shocking indictment of KTV 2's incompetence and betrays a total lack of awareness of their audience.

We received a total of 388 replies from the following nationalities:

Indians	165
British	44
Americans	42
Filipinos	37
Europeans	32
Pakistanis	29
Kuwaitis	16
Arabs	13
Bangladeshis	5
Sri Lankans	5

Comments

Many of the viewer's comments cannot be printed in a family newspaper, but the general message was plain enough. Everybody seems to hate the local sports programmes. Volleyball, basketball and local football matches are very unpopular with every nationality and age group. Viewers aged 7 to 65 participated in the poll.

Another common complaint was the lack of announcements in English. We estimate there are well over a quarter of a million English speakers who do not know Arabic, and they would all like to know what is going on.

The news came in for some harsh criticism too: "An insult to our intelligence," "Not enough international news," "Caters to morons," these were just a few of the comments we received.

Stick to scheduled timings

Children's television was condemned as being far too limited. Given the superb range of children's programmes shown in the West, why does KTV continue to show endless cartoons? Why do they keep replacing children's shows with last minute local sports events? Parents want more educational shows for their kids and many of them are so angry at the rubbish that KTV puts out that they said they refuse to let their children watch.

Teenagers are also unhappy since they feel that there are no programmes for them whatsoever. Chart Attack, which was taken off some months ago, is the second most popular show KTV 2 has ever shown. Documentaries and animal shows are very unpopular too, not in themselves, it seems, but simply because there are too many of them. Sometimes it seems there are more shows about sharks than humans!

Timing

Another complaint was about the timings of KTV 2. Last minute changes make viewers very angry. "Stick to the scheduled timings," said one, another added. "Volleyball, basketball and football should be on Channel One," "Sports are dreadful," said one angry



Falcon Crest: the most viewed show on KTV 2. Above: The Channings.



Sledgehammer: among top 10 favourites



Sledgehammer: among top 10 favourites

viewer, "Stop showing sports during kids' TV time," said another.

Old films are unpopular. "Too many old movies" one wrote — an idea which many people repeated. "Too many documentaries" was a common complaint. Perhaps the overall bitterness is best expressed by these comments:

"KTV 2 stinks!"

"Even Saudi TV is better!"

"KTV puts out the worst programmes in the world!"

"The present winter programmes are lousy!"

"Badly conceived, presented and produced, a travesty of TV viewing, American junk!"

Question Four: "Do you enjoy Cine Club?"

Yes 269

No 115

A nice vote of confidence for Farouk Abdul Aziz who has managed to get some really good films on KTV 2 in 1987 and fully deserves this support. However, a large percentage of viewers said they would enjoy it more if the commentary were in English.

Question Five: "In comparison with other Gulf English stations how would you rate KTV 2?"

Better 35

Same 104

Worse 249

A terrible criticism of KTV, made worse by the fact that of the 35 who voted that it was better, no less than 17 came from the Filipino community. "No Kuwaiti" said that it was better.

Question Six: "KTV has recently appointed new newscasters. How would you rate them?"

Excellent 15

Good 93

Fair 164

Poor 144

Here the Filipinos really distorted the result since eight of them said KTV 2 is excellent, but only seven agree from all of the others put together.

None of the Kuwaitis thought it was excellent!

News caters to morons'

Question Three: "How would you rate KTV 2's presentation?"

Votes

Excellent 15

Good 93

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Local sports unpopular

Question 1: We asked you to list your 10 favourite programmes in 1987, and although there was some difference in taste between nationalities, two clear favourites emerged with every group: Falcon Crest and Chart Attack. One or other of these topped every nationality's poll except for the Americans, who loved "L.A. Law," the British, who love "Open All Hours" and the Arabs whose favourite programme is the "Bill Cosby Show." Here are the top ten favourites:

1) Falcon Crest 173
2) Chart Attack 133
3) Moonlighting 86
4) The Cosby Show 76
5) Dempsey & Makepeace 70
6) Sledgehammer 69
7) Hitchcock Presents 61
8) Growing Pains 59
9) Miami Vice 58

30 (Wednesday) from 7 to 9 pm. For further details and location call 5620332; 5725071.

Tareq Rajab Museum

The museum has been closed for renovation. It reopens at the end of January and will display manuscripts, ceramics and textiles.

HOTELS

At the Hilton
Enjoy a slice of Christmas Stollen or a wedge of Irish Coffee Cake, the cake of the week, in La Patisserie. Christmas logs, stollen and cakes are also available. La Patisserie is open daily from 10 am to 10.45 pm.

At the Meridien

Special lunch and dinner menus will be offered this week at all the outlets. Versailles, La Brasserie and at Remy and Tony's Jam session enjoy to-tapping music on Thursday. Family fun on Friday in Lu

At the Holiday Inn

Pastries, stollen and logs for the festive season and New Year are available at the Lobby Lounge. Lunch featuring seasonal food will be offered at the Coffee Shop, Al Dara and Al Andalus. For details contact the hotel.

At the Ramada Al Salam

Special children's brunch parties will be held every Friday from January 1 in El Bendar. Lots of fun and games will be provided from 12 noon to 3 pm.

At the Sheraton

Al Hamra features a special buffet dinner of Dec 31 and a special lunch buffet on Jan. 1. Hunt Room will offer a special dinner buffet on Thursday night; music by the Paradise Trio. Riccardo features an a la carte menu and Le Tarboche will feature special lunch and dinner buffet on Thursday and Friday.

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WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Iwan Gallery

A collection of paintings by six Iraqi artists is being shown at the Iwan Gallery, Zahra Complex. Open daily from 9 am to 1 pm and 5 to 8 pm, until Jan 12.

FILMS

Indian Film Festival

Guru Dutt's "Kagaz Ke Phool" an experimental film, will be shown tonight at 7.30 pm at the auditorium of Kuwait's Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The film stars Guru Dutt and Waheeda Rehman. Children are not admitted. For further details contact the Cine Club, near Indian Embassy, Bneid Al Qar.

ACT

Auditions for ACT's next production "An Evening of Absurdity" will be held on Dec

55 953

55 961

55 969

55 977

55 985

55 993

55 1001

55 1011

55 1021

55 1030

55 1039

55 1048

55 1057

55 1066

55 1075

55 1084

55 1093

55 1102

55 1111

55 1120

55 1129

55 1138

55 1147

55 1156

55 1165

55 1174

55 1183

55 1192

55 1201

55 1210

55 1219

55 1228

55 1237

55 1246

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

DEATH is a very dull, dreary affair, and my advice to you is to have nothing whatever to do with it — W. Somerset Maugham, English writer (1874-1965).

Who is afraid of Brizola? Everyone

By Peter Muello

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, (AP): A popular lapel button in Rio reads, "Who's afraid of Brizola?"

The answer could include members of the armed forces, bankers, businessmen, rich people, the middle class, the right and left.

But his critics and supporters agree that Leonel Brizola, an old-style populist and state governor often called the "Caudillo," or strongman, is a strong contender to succeed President Jose Sarney in elections that could be held next year.

Brizola's importance has grown in recent months as economic and political troubles have mounted for Sarney, who in 1985 became Brazil's first civilian president in 21 years. Congress is now rewriting the constitution and has indicated it may force elections next year, in which Sarney would be ineligible to succeed himself.

"He (Brizola) is the great spectre of the election," the *Jornal do Brasil* said in a recent profile of presidential contenders. All the other parties and candidates are working on how to defeat Brizola, the newspaper said.

Speculation

Conservative Rep Guilherme Afif Domingos said: "His candidacy is one feared by various sectors. Frankly, because of Brizola, many people want to postpone the elections."

There is even speculation that if Brizola is elected, the conservative armed forces would stage a coup to topple him.

The concern might seem excessive for this 63-year-old self-styled socialist, who holds no elective office and whose party, the small Democratic Labor Party, was hurt by losses in last year's national elections and by the defection of prominent members.

"Those worries are exaggerated. I try to conduct myself correctly. The armed forces had an exemplary role in Brazil's transition to democratic rule. I want their support," Brizola said in an interview.

The left is afraid of Brizola, fearing he may take votes away from more ideologically based leftist parties — including the socialist and communist parties. Leftists don't trust what they see.

Leaving the scene in East Europe

By David Lewis

VIENNA, (Reuter): Western diplomats are speculating that Gustav Husak, who quit as Czechoslovak Communist Party leader, may be followed into decline by other East European leaders almost a generation older than Kremlin chief Mikhail Gorbachev.

The question is: will there by a "domino effect" after the resignation of the first East European leader to relinquish power voluntarily?

One diplomat in Warsaw said he believed the Soviet Union had been pressing for the older leaders like Husak, Hungary's Janos Kadar and East Germany's Erich Honecker to leave the scene since Gorbachev came to power.

"It's been clear from the beginning that Gorbachev regards them as belonging to a quite different political era and as people with whom he is not quite comfortable," the diplomat said.

Signal

"My conclusion is that the new Soviet leadership decided how to manage all this some time ago and the process of change has been set in hand."

A diplomat in Sofia said it was quite justified to speculate about a domino effect, adding: "It had to start somewhere. How far it will go, we don't know."

In Hungary, there have long been rumours that 75-year-old Kadar — installed in power after Soviet tanks crushed an anti-communist rising in 1956 — could step down before the next party congress in 1990.

"I think it will add to pressure already building here for the old man to go," one senior Western diplomat said from Budapest. "This might indeed add fuel to that tendency."

In Bulgaria, 76-year-old Todor Zhivkov has been in power for nearly 34 years. "He's



Rajiv: hard time

By T.S.K. Lingam

NEW DELHI, (UPI): Indians will remember 1987 as the year Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi lost his "Mr Clean" image and learned the hard lessons of politics.

Confronted by scandals involving alleged high-level corruption, a string of state election defeats, dissent within his ruling Congress (I) party and criticism over his leadership style, the 42-year-old prime minister saw much of his power base dissolve.

He attacks the right and the left — and makes alliances with both. He is thought to be anathema to the military, but meets regularly with ex-president Gen. Joao Figueiredo. He condemns US "imperialism" but says he admires the American people.

Voters love him or hate him but rarely are indifferent. A recent newspaper poll showed Brizola led a field of presidential hopefuls with 8.5 percent of those polled, more than twice the number of the second-place finisher.

But at the same time he received the highest negative rating — 48 percent of those interviewed said they wouldn't vote for him under any circumstances.

The poll listed 14 candidates who received from 0.6 percent of the votes to Brizola's 8.5 percent. Just over 63 percent of those interviewed were undecided.

The other top candidates include Orestes Quercia, governor of Sao Paulo, Brazil's richest and most populous state; Rep. Ulysses Guimaraes, president of the ruling Democratic Movement Party, and Dilson Fumaro, former finance minister and creator of the Cruzado plan, a failed anti-inflation programme.

Some critics say Brizola's rhetoric will scare off foreign investment and loans, and that he favours the poor slum-dwellers — and slum-based underworld bosses — at the expense of the middle class.

Brizola makes people edgy because he has no obligations to the right nor to the left," said former Rio de Janeiro Mayor Marcelo Alencar of the Democratic Labour Party, of which Brizola is president.

Brizola entered politics at a young age. The son of farm workers in the far southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, he left home at 12 and went to the state capital of Porto Alegre, where he eventually earned an engineering degree and was elected assemblyman, congressman and governor.

But in some areas they have pushed further than the leadership is prepared to go. In the next stage of reform, the leadership will need intellectuals, but for a different task: achieving the technological breakthrough that will make the Soviet Union a leading industrial power. But during that period — a complex and possibly confused time of key economic and social changes — the Kremlin may feel the need to stress unity over diversity.

Already some intellectuals say they feel a chill in the intellectual atmosphere, partly from a relatively low-key Gorbachev speech on Nov 2 which assessed Soviet history, partly from the dismissal of Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin on Nov 11.

Despite this, the changes that have taken place in poetry and

Rajiv loses 'Mr. Clean' image and learns hard lessons of politics



V. P. Singh: limelight

perception has lingered that he did not relentlessly pursue the offenders and played soft on his friends.

Rajiv also became embroiled in a running feud with then-President Zail Singh, who charged that the prime minister failed to fulfill his constitutional duties and then lied about it to parliament.

"That accusation by the President dealt a serious blow to Rajiv's image," said Khushwant Singh.

Analysts said that by mid-1987, Rajiv appeared desperate, needing only one more scandal or electoral defeat to lose office.

Meanwhile, the century's worst drought shook the economy, and the middle class and businessmen were taken aback by some of Rajiv's moves as finance minister that echoed policies of his mother and retreated from his stated objectives of deregulation.

India's key powerbrokers, Rajiv took over the finance portfolio and abruptly transferred Singh to head the Defence Ministry.

Singh then started an inquiry into bribes paid in the purchase of four West German submarines. Congress (I) party members alleged Singh had moved only to enhance his position at Rajiv's expense.

The minister resigned and formed an opposition grouping with other dissident Congress (I) leaders who were dissatisfied with what they said was Rajiv's imperious style of leadership.

Useless

People voiced unparalleled support for Rajiv's party and government largely because they perceived him to be an honest and capable prime minister who would lead India into the 21st century. They dubbed him "Mr Clean."

That image began to fade with the government's helplessness in the face of an upsurge in violence by Sikh extremists fighting to turn northern Punjab into the independent Sikh nation of "Khalistan."

A peace accord Rajiv signed in

July 1985 with moderate Sikhs is now a dead letter and the government has opened new political initiatives to solve the problem. At the same time, more than 800 people have died in extremist violence in the state this year.

Useless

Next came revelations that Sweden's Bofors company paid massive kickbacks in the 1985 purchase of a field artillery system, spurring opposition demands for Rajiv's resignation and stinging criticism in the press.

There is no proof linking Singh to any of the corruption, but

Analysts said that by mid-1987, Rajiv appeared desperate, needing only one more scandal or electoral defeat to lose office.

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Relaxed

At times it has infuriated the leadership. Ligachev, both Rasputin and Astafyev have since become critical of the direction perestroika is taking.

The reaction of other conservative writers has been virulent. One, Peter Proskurn, has called publication of the works of long-dead writers "necrophilia." His comments were published in the Communist Party daily Pravda. Much of the conservatives' wrath has been directed against the major literary journals.

These have been the driving force in creating a new atmosphere of openness. Three stand out — the monthlies Novy Mir and Znamya, and the weekly mass-circulation Ogonyok.

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Another weekly, Moscow News, has also frequently run a foul of the political leadership.

The nomination of new editors to these three journals was "the most significant achievement of perestroika so far," says Yuri Arakchev, a prominent writer.

Sergei Zalygin, who is not a party member, became head of Novy Mir. Grigory Baklanov took over Znamya. And Vitaly Korotich was named editor of Ogonyok, a lowbrow and nearly moribund weekly.

Role

Novy Mir and Znamya have between them changed the face of contemporary Russian literature. Among the works published for the first time this fall are Andrei Platonov's "The Foundation Pit," written in 1930 and suppressed here ever since.

Radical intellectuals say, however, that the attitudes of top Soviet leaders to cultural changes are beginning to diverge sharply. A year ago several prominent writers agreed that Gorbachev and second-ranking leader Yegor Ligachev were together on cultural policy. Today the same people view Ligachev and Viktor Chebrikov, the chief of the KGB (Soviet secret police), as distinctly more conservative than Gorbachev.

Concern

Ligachev has expressed concern on the debate over history. Recent articles on the Stalinist era have made the 1930s (the period of collectivisation and purges) even more confused than it used to be, complained in

August. And while leading writers like Anatoly Pristavkin want to discuss the social damage of the Leonid Brezhnev era (1964-82), Ligachev has spoken out passionately in defence of the achievements of the 1970s.

The changing attitude of the leadership has been mirrored in the literary world. Some of the first public warnings of an impending social crisis came in literature.

Valentin Rasputin's "The Fire" was published in July 1985, just four months after Gorbachev was elected party leader. Viktor Astafyev's "The Sad Detective" appeared in January 1986. Both works depict communities on the verge of social disintegration. Both men are on the conservative end of the spectrum of Russian writers.

They are associated with a loose group of authors known as the "village writers," some of

whom have had contacts with Ligachev. Both Rasputin and Astafyev have since become critical of the direction perestroika is taking.

Ogonyok's "outreach evenings" — meetings between the paper's writers and the public — have produced some of the most lively political discussion ever seen in the Soviet Union. More than a dozen such evenings have been held in Moscow, Leningrad, and smaller cities. They have also been organised for the staff of the Moscow air defence command, the space-control centre, and the Foreign Ministry.

Relaxed

At times it has infuriated the leadership. Ligachev, both Rasputin and Astafyev have since become critical of the direction perestroika is taking.

"Perestroika is reversible," says the outspoken economic commentator Vasily Selyunin. "It's holding on, thanks to an enthusiastic group of leaders at the top. But it is as brittle as the life of one man."

Pristavkin echoes these sentiments: "God grant (Gorbachev) good health."

It is clear that if any Soviet leader ever decided to clamp down on political or literary debate, he could do so. But the cost — in the form of social alienation that the leadership is struggling with — is likely now to be enormous.

The Christian Science Monitor

No precedent in the last 60 years of Bolshevik rule

A literary and cultural revival in Soviet Russia

By Paul Quinn-Judge

MOSCOW: Mikhail Gorbachev's 33 months in power have produced one lasting achievement: a literary and cultural revival that many Soviet observers feel has no precedent in the last 60 years of Soviet rule.

The literary revival has been accompanied by a new tolerance with regard to political and economic discussion. This has, for example, allowed an economist to express doubt that any reforms would make the present system work better, and a political observer to justify what official ideologists consider the unjustifiable — opposition within a socialist state.

The revival is part of a conscious effort by the Soviet leaders to mobilise intellectuals behind reform. So far, Gorbachev has been successful.

In the first stage of perestroika (restructuring), intellectuals have set the pace in the reform debate. They have led the attack on corrupt, incompetent, and conservative Communist Party officials. They have urged the re-examination of the most controversial periods of Soviet history, such as agricultural collectivisation and Joseph Stalin's purges.

But in some areas they have pushed further than the leadership is prepared to go. In the next stage of reform, the leadership will need intellectuals, but for a different task: achieving the technological breakthrough that will make the Soviet Union a leading industrial power. But during that period — a complex and possibly confused time of key economic and social changes — the Kremlin may feel the need to stress unity over diversity.

Already some intellectuals say they feel a chill in the intellectual atmosphere, partly from a relatively low-key Gorbachev speech on Nov 2 which assessed Soviet history, partly from the dismissal of Moscow party chief Boris Yeltsin on Nov 11.

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authors and filmmakers. And in art, Marc Chagall finally received official recognition with a major exhibit in Moscow this fall.

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They include the Mafia's most feared killer, Pino Greco, who was convicted of 58 murders, and Nitti Santapaola, leader of the Mafia in the east Sicilian town of Catania.

Symbolic

Their clan was given the commission to carry out the Mafia's most notorious crime, the 1982 murder of Palermo prefect and Carabinieri police hero Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa, his young wife and their bodyguards.

They include jailed leaders like Greco himself and Luciano Ligorio, boss of the "Corleonesi," the Mafia's most powerful clan, who have lost most of their power to the men on the outside.

But police and magistrates admit that their knowledge is now out of date and they do not know with any precision who is running the Mafia.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Economic climate stormy in 1987, outlook cloudy for 1988

Stock markets around the world still reeling

NEW YORK, Dec 28. (AP): A big, black question mark hung over the world economy as 1987 ended, with stock markets around the world still reeling from the October crash on Wall Street.

Could this be a rerun of the October 1929 crash — the forerunner of a worldwide great depression like the 1930s?

Economists noted some similarities, particularly pressures for trade protectionism. After stocks fell in 1929, nations raised trade barriers in an effort to protect themselves.

But the actual state of world business in late 1987 showed no sign of irreparable damage despite the stock market crash.

Continued Third World debt,

lower commodity prices, US budget and trade deficits and other problems such as an oil market that remained depressed despite a partial recovery from its 1986 plunge.

Crash

Many world stock markets appeared to be ending the year above their level on Jan 1, 1987, even after the October crash.

In 1987 major western banks wrote off billions of dollars of their Third World loans and posted lower earnings, but no big banks went under.

European and Asian leaders pledged closer cooperation with the United States in an effort to ease trade tensions and control currencies. And in contrast to the 1930s, when half of American banks failed, Duff and Phelps Inc., a Chicago-based financial consulting firm, predicted that US banks profits in 1988 will grow despite the Oct 19 stock market collapse.

Indeed, the crash may have been a blessing in disguise, said former US Federal Reserve Board chairman Paul A. Volcker, by forcing policymakers to address long-range economic problems such as US budget and trade deficits.

Given proper policies and international cooperation, Volcker said, "there is no reason that the economy can't go on and expand, that inflation be held in

check and that we could have an extended period of growth."

The United States, with foreign help, let the dollar slide toward year's end, hoping to ease the US trade deficit. But expressing the views of many nations, Hans Tietmeyer, a state secretary in West Germany's Finance Ministry, warned it is "extremely dangerous to believe that world economic imbalances can be evened out by letting the dollar swing down too far."

A year-end look at financial developments around the world:

The United States

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan, a vigorous free trade advocate, promised to veto any protectionist US trade legislation. But even Reagan was taking trade reprisals against Japan.

Reagan also negotiated with Congress to cut the US budget deficit, a financial black hole that had helped turn the United States from the world's biggest creditor nation into the world's biggest debtor. But the proposed \$30-billion reduction made only a dent in the \$150-billion federal deficit for the fiscal year that ends Sept 30, 1988.

Meanwhile, Japanese and Western European leaders collaborated with the Reagan administration to reduce the US trade deficit by pushing the American dollar down against other currencies.

Even so, the trade gap remained stubbornly agape at \$157 billion and even widened toward year-end. Economists feared a repetition in coming years of another feature of the 1930s depression — a succession of competitive devaluations, with each country trying to grab a bigger slice of the shrinking world trade pie.

Survey

A survey released in December by an American firm, the Decision Research Corp, found that 25 per cent of Americans believe the United States is very likely to encounter another economic depression.

The survey said continuing instability in the nation's finan-

Asia

Asia's economic picture in 1987 was dominated by the Japanese yen's climb against the dollar, which fuelled changes ranging from record jobless rates in Japan to soaring exports from the newly industrialised Asian countries.

Japan began to change from an export-reliant economy to one marked by growing domestic demand. Total export volume was down 2 per cent in the first three quarters of 1987, while imports were 17.3 per cent higher.

The yen's rise curbed the competitiveness of Japanese goods overseas and hit exporters with lower profits, production and investment. Unemployment reached a record 3.2 per cent in May. Economic growth was projected at 3.5 per cent in fiscal 1987, which ends next March.

Growth estimates for Asia's newly industrialised "little dragons" — South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore — ranged from Singapore's 7 per cent to 11-12 per cent for the remaining three.

Malaysia and the Philippines complained about US discrimination against their exports of palm and coconut oils. The United States also drastically curtailed imports of sugar, a major export of the Philippines and other Asian nations.

Latin America

Countries in Latin America, who are responsible for a large portion of the Third World's debt of more than \$1 trillion complained anew in 1987 that they can never pay their foreign loans if a rising tide of protectionism in the industrial countries keeps their export goods out of world markets.

The 12-nation European Economic Community failed at a December meeting in Copenhagen to settle a farm spending dispute and entered 1988 with a full-blown budget crisis — widely considered the most serious in the EEC's 30-year history.

But the basic problem

remained: a net outflow of money to pay interest on debts rather than the inflow of capital they needed.

Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, the Third World's three biggest debtors, now owe a total of more than \$260 billion, and formed a group of debtor nations known as G3.

"Latin America is the only region in the world with visible setbacks. Other continents continued to progress; we have not advanced," said Brazilian President Jose Sarney.

Eight Latin American presidents met in Acapulco to discuss their common problems in late November, and called on international lending agencies to loosen their purse strings and limit interest rates.

In 1987, Africa saw the prices of its commodities, such as cocoa and coffee, and the value of its currencies continue an unrelenting slide while its debt grew.

At year's end, the 50 members of the Organisation of African Unity held an emergency summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss the continent's collective debt of \$200 billion.

Most African states spent 40 per cent of their export earnings just to pay the interest on loans. Some nations, especially in West Africa, attempted to strengthen their economies by privatisation of some firms previously owned by the state.

The OAU conference cobbled together a plan it hoped to sell to creditors, proposing an international conference on African debt sometime in 1988.

"Nobody in the developed countries wants to see African children starve because we have to pay debts," said Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, the OAU chairman.

The South African economy was hard hit by international economic sanctions imposed because of the white minority government's racial discriminatory policy of apartheid. Coal exports dropped by 20 per cent and 10,000 black miners lost

their jobs as result. Exports of steel, textiles and foodstuffs also slumped.

Middle East

In the Middle East, the Iran-Iraq war and the after-effects of the sharp 1986 drop in oil prices continued to send ripples through the region's economies this year.

After falling below \$10 a barrel in 1986, oil prices rose to around \$18 in 1987 after members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed on production cuts.

But revenues remained far lower than in the early 1980s because of the lower oil production. In Saudi Arabia up to one million foreigners lost their jobs. Countries such as Egypt and Jordan, heavily dependent on remittances from their nationals working in oil-rich Arab nations, also suffered.

Communist world

In the Soviet Union, Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev was busy trying to shift the Soviet Union from an overly centralised system of management to a more democratic economic system in which local producers have greater authority.

Gorbachev's most dramatic break with Marxist orthodoxy was a law allowing Soviet citizens to establish small private businesses. The Soviet Union also showed greater interest in joint ventures with Western firms. Soviet national income increased by 2.4 per cent, but serious problems were reported in large sections of the economy.

In Eastern Europe, some Soviet allies adopted or considered economic reforms in an effort to revitalise their sluggish domestic economies. In an unprecedented move for a communist nation, Poland submitted an economic austerity plan to a public referendum and the government was embarrassed when it failed to pass.

In China the swing from a centralised government-run economy had gone even further than in the Soviet bloc.

World Business Summary

Kremlin reforms help oil industry to beat '87 target

MOSCOW, Dec 28 (Reuters): Kremlin economic reforms have helped the Soviet oil industry beat 1987 output targets and end a period of stagnation which marked the early 1980s. Oil Minister Vasily Dinkov was quoted as saying today. He told Tass news agency that 1987 output by the world's biggest producer was roughly 624 million tonnes — which is the equivalent of about 12.5 million barrels daily and more than 20 per cent of total global production. The industry had exceeded a 1987 target of 617 million tonnes of oil and gas condensates, performing better than last year when output of 615 million tonnes fell short of a target of 616.7 million tonnes. The target for 1988 is 625 million tonnes.

Dinkov said bureaucracy was partly to blame for the earlier stagnation. This had been cut back and Soviet oilmen now enjoyed greater autonomy. Also, 91 per cent of oil industry employees were better paid as a result of the reforms and, from early 1988, all plants would transfer to a new system of self-financing.

Next year, 38 new deposits would be exploited commercially and 115 new wells drilled, Dinkov added. But he complained that two out of three oil-producing centres still failed to meet targets and geological prospecting in promising areas such as Kazakhstan, Siberia, the Soviet far east and offshore remained slow.

The Soviet Union earns most of its hard currency from fuel exports and suffered when world oil prices fell last year.

Nevertheless, it promised in August 1986 to cut exports to the West to help shore up prices in a move seen by Western analysts as a symbolic gesture to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Moscow earlier this month published 1986 volume export figures for oil, a break with previous practice of reporting exports only in rough terms. The official monthly trade said petroleum exports reached 186.3 million tonnes in 1986 or 30 per cent of total production, compared with exports of 166.9 million in 1985.

Japan defence spending to increase by 5.2 pc

TOKYO, Dec 28. (AP): Japan will boost its defence spending by 5.2 per cent next fiscal year to about 3.7 trillion yen (\$29.13 billion), a Finance Ministry official said today. The ministry official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, also said Japan will raise its spending to provide aid to developing countries by 6.5 per cent to about 700 billion yen (\$5.51 billion) in fiscal 1988, which starts April 1. Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and Defence Agency director general Tatsutomo Kawara agreed on the level of defence spending in the government's fiscal 1988 budget, said the ministry official.

The budget is to be presented for approval at a cabinet meeting on Monday and to the Diet, Japan's parliament, early next year, said the ministry official.

Last year, the Finance Ministry proposed a fiscal 1988 draft budget totalling 56.7 trillion yen (\$446 billion), up 4.8 per cent from a year earlier. In the new budget, defence spending would comprise 1.013 per cent of Japan's estimated Gross National Product.

In fiscal 1987, Japan allocated 3.52 trillion yen (\$27.71 billion) for defence, up 5.2 per cent from fiscal 1986.

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Middle East Electricity '88

Stocks end year with gloomy forecast for early '88

Japan to cut imports of Iranian oil

TOKYO, Dec 28. (Reuters): Japan plans to slash the amount of oil it buys from Iran under long-term contracts after coming under heavy US pressure to join a full-scale embargo against the Gulf state, oil industry sources said today.

Acting under guidance from the powerful International Trade and Industry Ministry, Japanese refiners and traders have decided to reduce their daily purchases of Iranian oil by about 30 per cent from close to 300,000 barrels per day this year.

But Tokyo recently indicated that it would support an arms embargo against Tehran if the Gulf state refused to accept a UN-sponsored ceasefire.

It also decided to indirectly contribute to US efforts to ensure the safety of shipping in the Middle East by helping to finance radar installations in some Gulf states.

Meanwhile, the Tokyo Stock Market ended trading for 1987 on a somewhat sour note as pessimism spread into the outlook for the start of the New Year, brokers said.

The buyers have been glad to comply because heavy worldwide oil supplies have convinced them that prices are headed lower and that there is therefore no need to sign fixed contracts with Tehran.

Turkey plans to set up gold exchange

ISTANBUL, Dec 28. (Reuters): Flotation of the Turkish lira is now pencilled in for March and a gold exchange will be set up in Istanbul later, a senior Central Bank official said today.

Bankers said flotation of the lira, a major plank in Prime Minister Turgut Ozal's strategy of liberalising markets had been tentatively planned for January 15 but had been delayed for further technical study and consultation with banks.

The gold exchange would be an over-the-counter market but details like import laws and foreign participation were being discussed, said the Central Bank official, who declined to be identified.

"We shall move from the system of continual adjustment of the currency rate to a system of free interest and free rates. In this term the convertibility of the lira will be realised," Ozal said in Friday's reading of the government programme.

Market crash leaves cloud of anxiety over US economy

WASHINGTON, Dec 28. (Reuters): The October 19 "Black Monday" stock market crash has aroused anxiety about the US economy but fears of recession eased as the last weeks of 1987 brought strong signs of continued growth.

"The coming year promises an environment at least as volatile as that in 1987," said Henry Kaufman, chief economist of Salomon Brothers Inc and a leading Wall Street forecaster.

"The element of crisis that pervaded world financial markets in October 1987 threatens to re-emerge in the coming year."

But Kaufman and many other economists anticipate modest expansion in US output of goods and services. Kaufman sees US gross national product expanding by about 2.7 per cent after inflation in 1988.

The Reagan administration, acknowledging that the market crash shook the economy, scaled

back its forecast for 1988 economic growth. It expects GNP to grow by 2.4 per cent instead of the 3.5 per cent predicted in August.

"This downward revision, which is in line with many private forecasts, recognises the likely negative impact on growth in 1988 of the recent stock market crash and the increase in interest rates and tightening of monetary policy during 1987," according to Beryl Sprinkel, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers.

Analysts say a plan by the White House and Congress to trim the budget deficit by \$76 billion over the next two years is too little to calm jittery financial markets.

"The harsh reality is that the federal government, like the general population, is consuming too much and producing too little," said Delos Smith, federal budget specialist for the Conference Board, a private business research group.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

In search of good yields with low risk

By Midas

NOW that 1987 is on its way out maybe it's time for a quick look in our crystal ball as to what is going to happen in 1988.

For goodness' sake don't bet your life's savings on the following predictions. I don't want to be run out of town if I get it wrong!

Before we go any further, a cautionary tale. You've probably heard of Sir James Goldsmith, the billionaire who sold everything he had back in August and so rode out the crash on a pile of cash, doubtless laughing all the while.

The classic reaction of such lucky folk is to start buying their way back in while everything is being sold at rock bottom prices. This is how the Kennedy fortune was built up after the 1929 Crash, and how the Rothschilds got rich after Waterloo.

Indeed, Sir Robert Maxwell, who also managed to get out of the market before the October debacle, is now using his cash hoard to take over everything in sight. Even the wise old birds at the Kuwait Investment Office are buying BP shares while they're cheap.

Shares

So what about Sir James Goldsmith? Is he sneakily buying his way back into the boardrooms of selected victims? Taking up huge blocks of shares in various corporations? Swooping down like a wolf on the fold?

The answer is No. Sir James has put the whole lot in the bank and has gone off to Mexico where he plans to build a humble shack with a library for his 50,000 books somewhere along the Pacific coast. He has announced that he has no plans to return for at least six months.

Does he know something that the rest of us don't? Has he gone off his solid gold rocker? Or has he just decided that with a few economies he should just be able to scrape by on his annual income of approximately \$100 million?

For the rest of us, what does 1988 hold in store? Let's start by looking at oil prices, always a useful indicator as to how the world economy is going to go. The recent Opec meeting decided to leave the price at \$18 a barrel and to leave production at just over 16 million barrels a day.

Price

Sounds fine, the snag is that the spot price is nearer \$15 a barrel and Opec production is actually nearer 18 million barrels a day. However, don't let this seeming disarray fool you into thinking that Opec is ineffective. Because independent analysts have estimated that if the organisation did not exist, the world price of oil would be nearer \$5 per barrel!

So if the oil price should slip in the coming year certain countries will find that their industries will benefit greatly. West Germany and Japan are obvious beneficiaries of any slump in oil prices. Even if the price manages to hold during the coming year, they will still have the advan-

tage of their stronger currencies. Since both the yen and the Deutschmark have strengthened considerably against the dollar and oil sales are priced in dollars they are already enjoying the benefits of substantially cheaper oil.

If the dollar price drops as well they will be dancing in the streets of Cologne and Kyoto.

Weaken

So if the oil price seems likely to weaken in 1988, what about gold?

Over the past decade or so, the price of gold has often followed that of oil, when the oil price goes up, so does gold, but that situation seems to have changed.

The main reason for this is that the world's savers and investors no longer see the stock markets as totally safe.

Gold is the traditional haven in times of uncertainty and it seems more than likely that the price of gold will rise in 1988 as more and more people start to put just a part of their portfolios into precious metals.

Remember too that with the drop in the value of the dollar, gold at \$500 an ounce is still very cheap in either yen or Deutschmark terms. Personally, though, I can't see gold rocketing upwards like it did a few years back.

Lots of people lost a lot of money when it crashed back down again, and the memory is still painful. Rather I would expect to see gold drifting slightly higher month by month, with little spurts whenever the news is particularly frightening, or markets take a turn for the worse.

Increase

Will it end? I can imagine the price of gold to be about \$600 per ounce by the end of 1988. This isn't much of an increase, only 20 per cent, but there is a hidden factor, namely, the value of the dollar.

If the dollar keeps on sinking then even a price of \$600 per ounce begins to seem pretty weak, but if the dollar starts to recover again, then the \$600 gold price might well be buttressed by a healthy currency gain.

So what is in store for the dollar next year? There is one major factor which will become more and more important as the year goes on: the US election. At this point this seems quite unpredictable since there are too many candidates, too few policies, too much hype and not a single inspiring and courageous leader.

If one does not emerge in the coming months then the dollar could well keep on sinking since nobody in the US administration seems to have the guts to tell the people a few unpalatable truths about their over-inflating deficits.

Weak

Having said that, I think it's quite likely that in the short term the dollar will continue to be very weak, but will sooner or later recover. The reason is simple. The dollar is already a bit undervalued, if it sinks even further then sooner or later, people will start to see it as a bargain, funds will move in to take advantage

and then it will start to climb again.

When will this take place? Well, the dollar is currently around 126 yen, some experts have predicted a fall to as low as 100 yen, or even 80. That seems far too low, and if the dollar should fall as far as this then it will undoubtedly start to regain its strength.

I think that the dollar could well return to levels between 130 and 140 yen by the end of 1988, possibly even higher if the correction follows its usual course of overshooting.

Whenever the next election becomes clear then the dollar will begin to settle down as the world takes its measure of a new US administration.

The next factor to consider is interest rates which are still quite high in most countries. Germany and Japan excepted, although there again they have been bolstered by the appreciating value of those countries over the past couple of years.

Take London for instance, the people who own shares there include optimistic wealthy oil-rich Arabs, dour and gloomy industrialists, foxy get-rich-quick speculators, pension funds and so on.

Prices reflect the middle ground among all these competing, contrasting and conflicting groups.

year, the price of oil will weaken, gold will rise.

Naturally, all of the above is very tentative, any major political upheaval or natural disaster could change everything at a stroke. A devastating earthquake in Japan or California, another Chernobyl, a happy conclusion to the Iran-Iraq war, the death of a crucial leader, any one of these could radically change all of my predictions.

And so we come to the heart of the matter, the world's stock markets.

In reality, stock markets are the leading edge of world history, they deal not with the present, but the future as far as can be estimated, guessed or imagined. A market is really no more than a consensus of opinion.

Take London for instance, the people who own shares there include optimistic wealthy oil-rich Arabs, dour and gloomy industrialists, foxy get-rich-quick speculators, pension funds and so on.

Prices reflect the middle ground among all these competing, contrasting and conflicting groups.

Role

In the wake of the crash there seem to be even more diverse opinions as to what is going to happen next than ever before.

On one hand you have Sir James Goldsmith saying it's all going to the dogs, and Maxwell on the other buying everything he can lay his hands on, while others, bankrupted by the carnage of October are too busy trying to re-group their forces to take any role in the markets at all.

The main point seems to me to be a question of confidence. Looking back to the collapse of the gold price in the early seventies we can see that it takes an awful long time for investor confidence to be restored. The present rally in the markets is pretty shallow and I suspect that it is mainly geared towards making year end figures look as healthy as possible. I think that in the New Year there is likely to be another price slump.

Agreement

However, there seem to be a lot of good news around, the recent INF agreement has lowered tensions, the oil price is no longer a problem, inflation is quite low. Will the market simply ignore the good news while looking for bad news to feed its growing paranoia? Sadly, it seems all too likely. The US deficits have overshadowed all else for the past few months and will likely continue to do so.

The Germans have a total horror of inflation and will do everything they can to prevent it, other countries are not quite so paranoid. I think that inflation in Europe and the US will quite likely rise during 1988, there is likely to be another price slump.

And the small saver or investor? For the foreseeable future, cash is king. A portion of one's portfolio in gold, some in bonds, some in a managed currency fund, these are reasonable alternatives, but the majority of one's holdings should be as liquid as possible. With a modicum of luck, 1988 will be a quieter year than the one we have just lived through, a period of economic convalescence if you like. The depression that everybody dreads might fade away into a mere slowdown. At least let's hope so.

Gain

The reason for this is that every government is on its guard against the danger and none of them will gain any lasting benefit from a re-kindling of the hyperinflation which caused so much trouble during the seventies.

So where does all this leave us? To re-cap, inflation will rise slightly, the dollar will be weak in the short term, but should recover when the world feels it has sunk too far, interest rates will drift slightly but may well rise again in the latter half of the coming year.

Having said that, I think it's quite likely that in the short term the dollar will continue to be very weak, but will sooner or later recover. The reason is simple. The dollar is already a bit undervalued, if it sinks even further then sooner or later, people will start to see it as a bargain, funds will move in to take advantage

NEW YORK

NAME	OPEN	CLOSE	GEN MILLS	49/6	50/0	NEW ENG EL	21/6	21/6	SF 5TH PAC	48/0	49/0
A BSCH CO	32/1	32/1	GENL MOTOR	62/2	63/2	NEW PLA RE	14/5	14/5	SHELL TRAN	79/4	78/6
ATLANTIC R	70/5	71/2	GEN SIGNAL	44/7	45/0	NEWELL CO	28/0	28/2	SHER PLOU	57/4	68/6
AETNA LIFE	44/7	44/7	GENCORP	21/6	22/0	NEWMTN NI	35/3	35/6	SHER-WEL	25/2	25/4
ALASKA AIR	13/6	13/7	GENRAD INC	10/0	10/0	NEWMTN GLD	40/2	39/7	SINGER CO	46/4	46/4
ALCAN ALUM	27/5	28/2	GEN INTL	4/2	4/2	NICOR INC	23/4	23/7	SMITH INT	6/6	6/6
ALCO STAND	20/6	21/0	GEORGI-PAC	36/1	36/3	NL INDS	5/2	5/3	SNITK BEC	49/2	49/6
AN CAP SEC	23/6	24/0	GERB SCIE	17/6	18/0	NOBLE AFF	12/4	12/5	SOPH CP	38/0	38/7
ANER CYAN	42/4	43/2	GILETT	30/6	31/3	NORD RESU	7/1	7/2	SOURCE CAP	35/6	36/0
AN FAMILY	13/6	14/0	GLOBAL MAR	1/4	1/4	NORTHROP	27/0	26/7	SOUTHERN	22/4	22/4
AN HOM PRO	72/0	72/0	GODRICH	10/5	10/6	NORTOR	46/6	46/6	SPERRY CP	14/6	14/6
AN STANDAR	37/6	37/7	GOODRICH	42/0	42/2	NOVO IND	22/6	23/1	SQUARE D	53/2	53/5
AN STORES	49/4	49/6	GOODYEAR	61/0	61/4	NUCOR CORP	39/0	39/2	SQUIBB	61/0	62/4
AMER T T	27/2	27/4	GOODYEAR	11/3	11/7	OAK INDS	1,00	1,02	STALEY AE	24/3	24/3
AMCO CP	68/0	68/5	GOULD INC	11/3	11/7	OCCLIDENTAL	24/1	24/4	STERL DRUG	54/7	55/2
AMCO INC	47/6	48/2	GRACE MR	24/4	24/6	OCEN DRIL	16/0	16/1	SU CO INC	52/6	53/1
AMCO PIT	0	13/2	GRAINGER	56/4	56/3	ODGEN CORP	28/0	29/0	SUNDRASTR	43/4	43/4
ANR CORP	37/0	37/5	GREYHOUND	26/1	26/3	ODIN MATT	14/6	13/0	SUPER VAL	17/3	17/5
ANR HESS	25/7	26/3	GROLIER	9/3	9/3	OLIN MATT	41/5	41/7	SH AIRLINE	14/1	14/1
ANTHEN ELE	9/3	9/6	GRUMAN	18/4	18/6	PHARMA D	6/3	6/4	SH GAS	20/3	20/3
APACHE CP	7/5	7/6	GULF RES-C	11/4	11/4	PANHANDLE	21/2	21/4	TANDY CORP	33/4	34/0
APACHE PET	3/5	3/6	HECLA MIN	13/5	13/5	PARKER DRI	2/6	2/6	TELEX CORP	55/1	55/5
AVON PRODS	24/4	25/0	HEILEN BR	39/6	39/6	PARKER HAN	40/0	40/2	TERADYNE	16/6	17/2
BELL ATLAN	65/2	66/0	HEINZ HJ	42/0	42/5	PATRICK PET	3/0	3/0	TESORO PET	11/3	11/3
BELL CALL	28/3	28/5	HEL CURTIS	26/6	27/0	PAYLSS CSH	11/5	11/7	TEX AMER B	3/2	3/3
BELL-HOW	59/4	59/4	HELM-PAYNE	19/2	19/4	PULLMAN CO	4/6	4/7	TEX EAS TR	27/4	27/4
BETH STEEL	17/6	18/2	HNOY-HARIN	16/6	16/2	PC INDS-96	0	9/0	TEXACO INC	38/0	38/5
BINX BOSTON	22/5	22/5	HOLIDAY C	25/3	25/7	PENN CENTR	4/4	4/5	TEXAS INC	0	30/7
BINX BSTA-B	0	48/2	HOME DEPOT	19/4	19/5	PHILIPS PE	88/4	89/7	TEXMARK	24/7	24/7
BINX NY	27/6	27/5	HOME FED S	21/5	21/4	PHILLIPS PE	34/0	34/4	TEXCO CORP	1/3	1/6

Gold gains

Dollar stumbles to further record lows

FRANKFURT, Dec 28. (Reuter): The dollar tumbled today to historic lows below 1.60 West German marks and 123 Japanese yen, despite central bank intervention and its slide started a retreat in share prices on Wall Street and in Europe.

The dollar was quoted in Asia as low as 1.5870 West German marks. In Europe, it touched a quoted low of 122.75 yen.

At the close of European trading the central banks had managed to lift it to 1.5950 marks and 122.95 yen — but that was well below values last week ahead of the Christmas holiday when it was worth just over 1.62 marks and 126 yen.

Jotted

Today's dollar fall jolted confidence on Wall Street, reversing a three-week pre-Christmas rally in New York stocks. The Dow Jones industrial average of 30 stocks dropped 52 points to 1,947 in the first half-hour after the New York Stock Exchange reopened after the Christmas break.

The dollar fell after currency dealers in Asia again convinced themselves that the United States, in its anxiety to correct a huge trade deficit, would be happy to see its currency com-

inue to lose value.

They decided to sell the dollar to test how low it would be allowed to sink. "We can't tell if the US will support the dollar. That's why the market is trying to test the dollar's bottom," one said.

Central banks of Japan, West Germany, France, Italy and Switzerland all bought dollars, market sources reported.

Joined

The key question was whether the US Federal Reserve Board had joined in. Some European dealers suspected that it had. Some New York sources said that speculation that this was the case had certainly helped steady the dollar.

Traders said the Bank of Japan bought \$200 million to \$300 million during the morning in an attempt to slow the fall of the dollar, which has dropped 9.23 yen since Dec 8.

"In the near future, the dollar is likely to plunge further unless Japan's Central Bank takes measures such as a lowering of interest rates," said Kenji Yokota, managing director of investment advisers' department at Yasuda Trust and Banking Co.

The dollar's nosedive came

less than a week after finance ministers and central bankers of the Group of Seven industrialised nations issued a joint statement recommitting themselves to stabilising foreign exchange rates.

Reaction

But dealers in Milan said the dollar's reaction indicated deep distrust in the measures. Earlier, Japanese dealers had shown cool reaction to the statement, noting it did not specify target zones for the dollar's exchange rates.

In Zurich gold closed at \$490.50 an ounce, up 5.95 from Thursday's close of \$484.55. Silver rose 13 cents to \$6.88 an ounce from \$6.75.

The London bullion markets remained closed.

But others doubted if the Fed had acted. "If the Fed has been in, it has not done a very good job of it," one said.

European dealers said trading was thin, because the London market remained closed until tomorrow, so quite small sales sufficed to move the dollar down.

A sudden dollar drop in Europe's afternoon was variously attributed to a large yen/mark order in the thin market pushing up the mark, and a Japanese investor selling out of

Switzerland.

Japanese Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa said he expected other central banks to help the dollar in line with last Wednesday's Group of Seven (G-7) statement which reiterated a call for stable currencies.

The statement by finance ministers of the United States, Japan, West Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada said a further dollar fall could damage the global economy.

Document

But President Reagan's chief economic adviser, Beryl Springer, has said the document contained no specific agreement to support the dollar.

Stockbrokers in Frankfurt and Paris cited the dollar's weakness for lower share prices in those centres. A cheap dollar crimps earnings on exports to the United States.

But they said business was very thin, with many operators still away for an extended Christmas holiday.

Switchback

The Paris 50-share Bourse indicator ended 3.39 per cent down on the day. Shares also ended weaker in Belgium and the Netherlands where the Amsterdam all-share indicator ended

4.7 per cent down.

Tokyo stocks had a switchback rise on their last half-day of trade in the year. The key Nikkei index fell 600 points only to rebound and close about 30 points higher at 21,564.00.

The movement was largely due to institutions juggling the market around, brokers said.

The New Year brigade, which believes a lower market at the end of the old year is a bad omen, finally won out. One broker described the day as unreal.

The Hang Seng index, the Hong Kong market's prime indicator of blue chips, fell 92.32 points, closing at 2,286.75. Turnover amounted to \$866.79 million Hong Kong dollars (\$111.12 million) compared with \$797.63 million Hong Kong dollars (\$102.3 million) during Thursday's half-day trading.

The market was closed on Friday for the Christmas holiday.

The Manila Stock Exchange index was down 5.22 points from Thursday's close at 796.24.

The Tokyo Stock Exchange will be closed Dec 29-Jan 3, while the foreign exchange market will be closed Jan 1-3.

US stock and commodity markets will be closed on Friday in observance of New Year.



A bourse dealer seen in nervous trading following a sharp fall in the dollar fixed at 5.4330, its lowest level against the French franc in six years. Market sources said the Bank of France intervened shortly after the opening when the dollar fell as low as 5.4150 francs. (Reuter radiophoto)

Chinese venture capital turns up in Florida property deal

JACKSONVILLE, Florida, Dec 28. (Reuter): Some Florida residents may soon be living in Chinese-financed housing as a result of Beijing's recent moves towards economic liberalisation.

Chinese housing pioneers, but commercial and residential development. "This should be a five-year project and the total development will be in excess of \$100 million," Wagner said.

CSCEC, he added, was looking at developing a resort hotel in Guatemala, a petrochemical plant in Argentina and commercial buildings in Los Angeles, Washington DC and Seattle in Washington state.

The China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) of Beijing has chosen this northern Florida city as the site of its first housing development in the United States.

"This is their prototype residential project," said Pamela Wilcock, an American marketing representative of CSCEC in Jacksonville.

In a state where real estate has frequently turned to bust, the company has bought 107 acres (43 hectares) of land for \$1.7 million. It hopes to transform the investment into a \$27 million housing development called Chinaberry Lakes.

When the final phase of the project is complete some five years from now, Wilcock said Chinaberry Lakes should contain 500 single family homes ranging in price from \$55,000 to \$80,000.

But the project has brought with it a sweet-and-sour relationship with Jacksonville.

The city fathers welcomed the

Chinese housing pioneers, but commercial and residential development. "This should be a five-year project and the total development will be in excess of \$100 million," Wagner said.

CSCEC, he added, was looking at developing a resort hotel in Guatemala, a petrochemical plant in Argentina and commercial buildings in Los Angeles, Washington DC and Seattle in Washington state.

The agency has also signed an agreement to develop a 700-acre (280 hectares) resort in Bimini, the Bahamas, complete with a casino.

"As you can imagine, a casino is most profitable," Wagner said. "It demonstrates there are commercial agencies that operate out of mainland China that are profit-motivated in a most capitalistic way."

CSCEC-Florida president Tao Jim-Tang said the company chose Jacksonville for its first residential development in the United States because the city was one of the fastest-growing in the country and because of local government support.

The sole developer of Chinaberry Lakes, CSCEC-Florida paid cash for the land and will not borrow to finance the rest of the project — a contrast to how American developers commonly finance their projects.

"The CSCEC will pay (cash) for all the construction, so they won't be encumbered by paying interest," Wilcock said.

Kuwait Oil Company (KSC) / Getty Oil Company

Joint Operations

(Kuwait Oil Company and Getty Oil Company) announce the tender for:

CLEANING & ASSOCIATED SERVICES

Experienced contractors wishing to participate in this tender, are invited to collect the Tender Documents from Contracts Administration Office at Joint Operations — Wafra during the official working hours from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. not later than 9:00 a.m. on January 20, 1988, against a non-refundable fees of KD. 75/-

S. Arabia won't sell oil at discount

RIYADH, Dec 28. (Reuter): Saudi Arabia will not sell its oil below official Opec prices unless overproduction by other members seriously threatens its market share, a Saudi oil official said today.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, has come under pressure to offer discounts or other trade concessions because of weakness in the oil spot market, where prices have fallen below those set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

The official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters the kingdom had repeatedly turned down requests for discounts.

"Every day we receive calls from people asking us to be more merciful in our terms. We say no, and they say okay and lift (oil) anyway," the official said.

Quota

He said Saudi production in December would average close to its Opec quota of 4,343 million barrels per day (bpd), showing the kingdom could sell nearly all of its quota at official prices.

But he said Saudi Arabia was determined to preserve its market share and would consider any means to do so if it was threatened by output violations by other Opec states.

"If our production level fell below the quota, we would assess why, and if it was because someone else was overproducing then we would assume the (Opec) agreement is compromised and there is no agreement," he said.

At a meeting in Vienna earlier this month, Opec agreed to extend into the first half of 1988 its 1987 second half production ceiling of 13.06 million bpd, excluding Iraq, and keep prices at \$18 a barrel.

The official said Saudi Arabia had several ways to make its oil more attractive to buyers apart from straight discounts. "But we assume we will not be finding ourselves using such methods," he said.

Bid to boost military, aid outlays

Japan budget to reform finances

of maintaining 60,000 US troops in the country. The Japanese contribution will rise by 11 per cent or about 12.8 billion yen (\$100 million) to 120.3 billion (about \$1 billion).

Prime Minister Noboru Takehisa will announce further measures to expand Japan's support for the US troops on Jan 1, the Foreign Ministry official said.

Overall military spending will rise above 1 per cent of the Gross National Product for the second year in a row.

The defence budget will increase by 5.2 per cent to 3.7 trillion yen (\$30.6 billion), or 1.013 per cent of GNP.

Criticised

For many years Japan kept defence spending below the 1 per cent limit but lifted the self-imposed limit last year. The move was criticised by some of Japan's Asian neighbours where

the memory of Japanese military expansion during World War II is still fresh.

"I think we have explained in full detail our rationale for eliminating the 1 per cent barrier when it was adopted by a cabinet resolution January last year," a Foreign Ministry official said.

The budget includes a down-payment for Aegis missile ship, a new generation of fighter planes and an over-the-horizon radar system all to be purchased in part from American companies.

To reduce Japan's reliance on the export economy, the government will continue a policy of increased spending on public works projects to stimulate domestic consumption.

Greater domestic consumption, including purchases of imported products, is one way Japan can reduce its trade surplus plus with the United States, which last year hit a record \$59 billion.

Public works funding will increase by 20 per cent over the 1987 budget to 72.17 billion yen (\$586 million). The figure, however, is identical to the 1987 budget when July's supplementary budget is added in.

Aid

Aid to developing countries will increase by about 6.5 per cent to 700 billion yen (\$55 billion). As in the previous year, 70 per cent of the aid will go to Asian countries and rest will be split between Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

The Japanese government says at the same time it increases the total budget, it will reduce government borrowing by 15.6 per cent. This is made possible by selling 1.3 trillion yen (\$10 billion) in government-owned Nippon Telegraph Corp. Stock and collecting an anticipated 9.5 per cent increase in tax revenue from greater economic activity.

The new rate applies to all Gulf ports in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE.

Last summer a war risk premium of 0.10 per cent was levied on ships using UAE ports outside the Gulf for the first time after two ships hit mines off Fujairah and Khor Fakhan.

The new rate applies to all Gulf ports in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE.

Officials at the Bank of Korea, the Central Bank, said South Korea's foreign exchange reserves are expected to hit an all-time high of \$10 billion by the end of this year, government officials said today.

Foreign exchange holdings indicate a country's stability to pay overseas.

Officials at the Bank of Korea, the Central Bank, said South Korea's foreign exchange reserves are expected to hit an all-time high of \$10 billion by the end of this year, government officials said today.

The officials attributed the swell to ever-growing current account surplus, expected to total \$10 billion by year-end. This year's current account surplus stood at \$8.9 billion.

The current account surplus includes a trade surplus of an estimated \$6 billion, plus invisible trade such as tourism income and unilateral transfers.

The good economic performance is also expected to help the country reduce its external debt from \$44.5 billion at the end of last year to \$35.5 billion by the end of this year, the officials said.

Reconsider new hike in war rates: UAE insurers

to \$50 million, shipping experts say.

The hull war risk premium is additional to normal insurance rates. Cargoes are insured separately.

Hannoun said the UAE group had appealed against the rise and was seeking at least a separate rate for cargo vessels, which are not hit as often as tankers.

"We have asked (the WRRC) to reconsider the 0.75 rate because we feel this increase can't be justified," he said. "We also asked for separate rates, one for marine hull tankers and one for commercial ships which are not as threatened."

Hitting

Iran and Iraq have stepped up attacks on Gulf ships, hitting a total of 18 vessels in a two-week period ending on Friday.

Two of the 18 were cargo ships set alight -- the South Korean Hyundai No. 7 was carrying timber to Dubai in the UAE, and the Maldives-flag Island Transporter had loaded bulk sulphur at the Saudi port of Dammam.

The value of tanker hulls vary with class and age. From \$8.5 million to \$45 million and cargo hull values range from \$3 million

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INFOCUS

the world today
VICTIMS
OF
MURKIN VICTOR
COLLISION
DIED AT TAIWAN STRAIT AT
10:00 PM ON DECEMBER 20, 1987



A WEEK after a Philippine ferry sank in the world's worst peacetime sea tragedy, a woman continues the mournful task of searching for missing relatives in a coffin-filled sports stadium converted into a temporary morgue. (Reuter radiophoto)



FORMER New Jersey State Senator David Friedland, who had been captured earlier this month on the Maldives Islands, smiles as he arrives at Kennedy Airport from Zurich on Sunday. He faces trial on fraud charges that carry a potential sentence of 150 years in prison. (Reuter radiophoto)



AFTER spending Christmas in jail, Kanak Independence leader Yelwene Yelwene gives a press conference after being released yesterday morning in Noumea, New Caledonia. (Reuter radiophoto)



AN Iranian warship stands next to the West German container ship "Norasia Pearl", which belongs to the Norasia Line company, in the southern Gulf yesterday. The Iranian warship halted the vessel and then sent a small boat across to inspect its cargo. Iranians patrol this part of the Gulf to check the passing vessels and sometimes attack them. (Reuter radiophoto)



EGYPTIAN President Hosni Mubarak (right) met Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock yesterday. Mock, on a ten-day visit to Egypt, on Sunday condemned Israeli action against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. (Reuter radiophoto)



A MONEY broker checks the dollar rate at midday yesterday. The dollar traded at 123.60 yen, down sharply from 125.20 yen in Tokyo on Friday. (Reuter radiophoto)



THE Porsche team pose for photographs near their cars in Reims, France on Sunday. The tenth Paris-Dakar race starts Friday, January 1. From left to right: Jean-Pierre Jabouille, Gili Levent, P. Landreau and Jacques Lafitte. Jabouille and Lafitte are former Formula-1 drivers. (Reuter radiophoto)



SWISS boxer Mauro Martelli is held up high after retaining his European welterweight boxing title in Lausanne on Sunday. Martelli defeated challenger and French champion Jean-Marie Touati. (Reuter radiophoto)



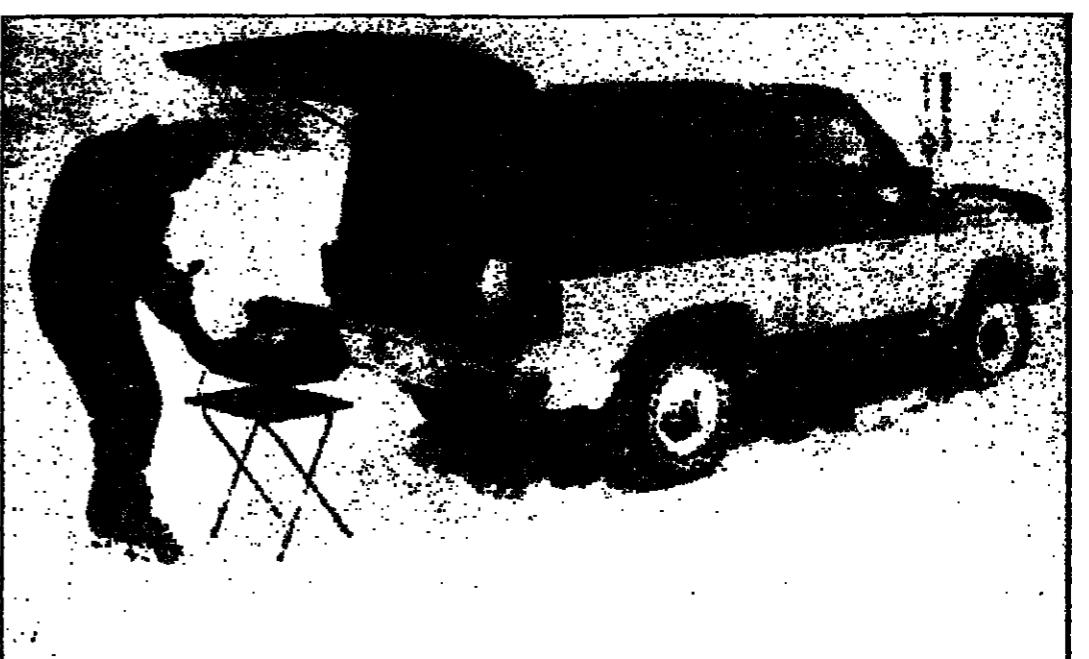
YOUNG Palestinians are greeted by relatives before they go on trial in the military court in Gaza yesterday on the second day of trials. The youngsters had been involved in the uprising in the Gaza Strip. (Reuter radiophoto)



WEST GERMAN Anton Fischer jumps into his bobsleigh while Chrisoph Langen is still pushing from the start of the two-men bobsleigh World Cup event at the Koenigssee bob course on Sunday. Anton Fischer drove to the second place with his brakeman in the time of 1 min. 40.32 seconds. (Reuter radiophoto)



AN unidentified child crawls to reach Pope John Paul II as he speaks to a group of visitors during a special audience at his summer villa at Castelgandolfo on Sunday. (Reuter radiophoto)



HUDDED over his cookstove in a driving snowstorm on Sunday a Denver Broncos fan Willis Matney continues with his pre-game tailgate party in a near-empty parking lot across from Mile High Stadium. Despite the near blizzard conditions, the Denver Broncos played the San Diego Chargers in the final game of the regular season. (Reuter radiophoto)

Dear Junior Readers,

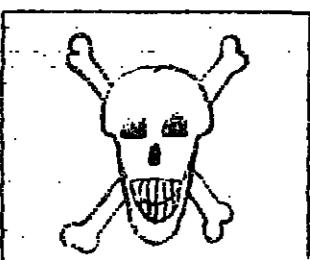
We hope you are enjoying the mystery 'The Curse of the Lost Idol' and that you are helping Annie solve each week's puzzle. Clues and evidence lurk in the words and pictures so read and look at the pictures carefully.

When Eric and the Professor find the lost idol of pure gold they become responsible for protecting it and Annie later becomes innocently involved.

In each Junior Times there is a new clue for you to solve. Follow these clues and help the Professor, Eric and Annie solve the ultimate mystery of the idol's curse.

Aunt Barbara

Doctor, doctor



What's wrong?
I haven't a clue.

Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a ventriloquist.

You're far too old to have a dummy.

Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm still at school.

Sit down and I'll give you an examination.

Doctor, doctor, everyone thinks I'm a cricket ball.

How's that?

Not you as well.

Doctor, doctor, my aunt has a sore throat.

Give her this bottle of antiseptic.

Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a Swiss roll and custard.

No wonder you're a trifle unwell.

Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a doorknob.

All right, don't fly off the handle.

Doctor, doctor, I feel like an old sock.

Well, I'll be darned.

Doctor, doctor, I can't stop doing crosswords.

THERE was once an old miller who had neither wife nor children, but only three apprentices, who helped with the work in the mill. 'I am no longer young,' he said to them one day, 'and my sole desire is to sit quietly by the fire. Out you go into the world, and I shall gladly hand over the mill to the boy who brings me the finest horse. In return I shall expect him to look after me until my death.'

Now the youngest of the three, whose name was Jack, was considered rather a stupid fellow by the two older boys. All three left the mill together, but when they were a mile or so from the village the older two tried to chase Jack away, saying: 'We don't want you with us, Jack — you'll never find a horse in a million years!'

But Jack followed along behind, and when night fell they turned into a little cave for shelter. The two older ones waited till Jack was asleep, then off they crept and left him lying there.

When daylight came Jack found himself deserted and he was quite scared, for he had not the least idea where he was. He went out of the cave and scrambled over some boulders into the forest, thinking to himself: 'Here I am alone and without a friend.'

'No,' he replied, 'I have never danced with a cat.'

Then take him to bed,' she said to the cats.

in the whole wide world. How on earth can I find a horse?' As he wandered through the trees lost in thought, he met a little spotted cat, who smiled at him.

'Where are you going, Jack?' she asked.

'You won't be able to help me?' he replied ungraciously.

'I know very well what it is that you want,' said the cat. 'You are looking for fine horse! Come and serve me for seven years, and I will give you the most beautiful horse in the world.'

'What a strange cat!' thought Jack. But he agreed to go with her all the same.

She took him to her enchanted castle, where she had cats to wait on her, running nimbly up and down stairs, having a fine merry time. In the evening at dinner-time three of them made music: one played the double-bass and one the violin, while the third blew the trumpet. When the meal was over, the table was carried away and the tabby cat said, 'Come now, Jack, and dance with me.'

'No,' he replied, 'I have never danced with a cat.'

Then take him to bed,' she said to the cats.

One day she said to him, 'Go out and mow my meadow and spread out the hay to dry.' For this purpose she gave him a silver scythe and a golden whetstone. So off Jack went to the meadow, mowed the hay and spread it out to dry. When he had finished, he took the scythe and whetstone back to the house and asked if he could have his reward.

'Would you like to see my horses, Jack?' asked the cat.

'Yes, please!' said Jack. She opened the doors of

the little silver house, and there stood twelve silver horses, gleaming and glittering, the most beautiful horses he had ever seen.

'Go home now,' she said, and she gave him food and drink to take with him. 'I cannot give you your horse yet, but I will follow with it in three days' time.'

She pointed out the way to the mill, and Jack set out. But all the time he had been with her, she had not given him any new clothes, and he was still wearing the worn and patched old things which he had brought with him seven years previously, and which were now far too small for him.

When he reached the mill he found that the other two boys had arrived before him, with their horses: but one horse was blind, and the other lame.

'Where is your horse, Jack?' they asked.

'It will be following in three days' time.'

'Indeed,' they laughed. 'It must be a fine horse that can come on its own.'

They drove to the little silver house which he had built for her with the silver tools. But it had turned into a great castle, in which everything was made of silver. So they were married, and he was so rich that he had more than enough for the rest of his life, and they lived very happily together.

opened and out stepped a beautiful princess, and this princess was the spotted cat whom Jack had served for seven years. She went into the mill and asked for him.

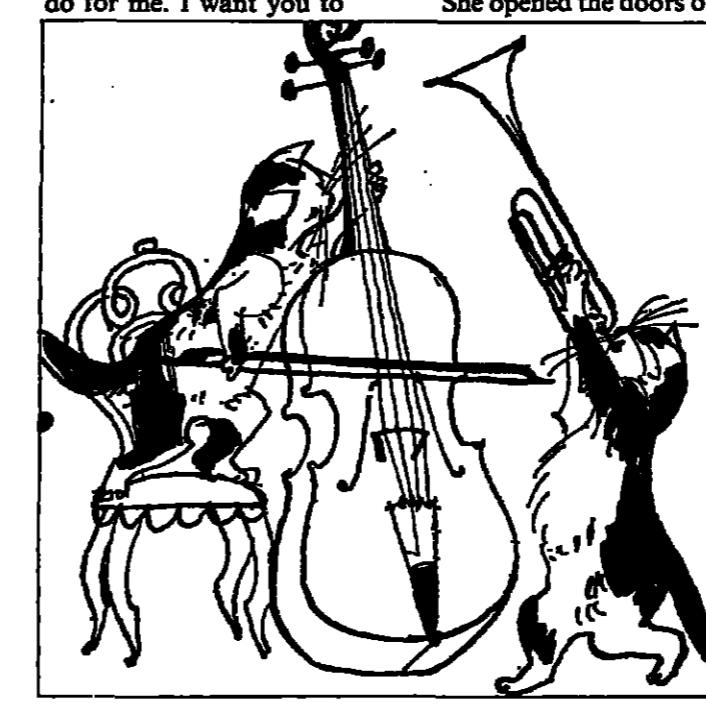
'We could not have him in the mill,' said the miller. 'He was so tattered and torn that we had to put him in the goose-hut.'

The princess told them to fetch him, so they went and brought him to her. A footman laid out magnificent clothes for him, and he had to wash and change; and when he was ready no king could have looked more smart and handsome. The princess called her serving-man to bring the seventh horse before the miller, saying: 'This is for the miller's third apprentice.'

'Then he must have the mill,' exclaimed the miller.

But the princess laughed, and said, 'Keep your mill! She took Jack by the hand and led him to her coach, and they drove away.

On the morning after the three days had gone by, there rolled up to the mill a coach drawn by six silver horses, gleaming and glittering, with a serving man following behind with a seventh horse, which was for the poor miller's boy. The door of the coach



Cats and dogs

1. What is unique about Manx cats, and where did the breed originate?

2. Who was Cerberus?

3. Who described the archcriminal cat in these terms? Macavity's Mystery Cat; he's called the Hidden Paw — he's the master criminal who can defy the Law. He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying Squad's despair:

For when they reach the scene of crime — Macavity's not there.

4. Who were the respective owners of Diamond, Flush, and Fido?

5. Can you give the origin of the phrase 'not enough room to swing a cat'?

6. According to the US Public Health Service, what are the three breeds of dog that bite the least? The most?

7. What was the name of the fictional cat who suddenly showed a surprising ability to understand and speak the English language, and then proceeded thoroughly to unnerve a proper English houseparty by commenting acidly on the activities and characters of the various houseguests?

8. Weimaraner dogs were first bred in Germany for hunting stags in which peculiar fashion?

9. What are seal-points and blue-points?

10. What have mad dogs and Englishmen in common, according to whom?

Answers: 1. Manx cats, which are practically tailless, came from the Isle of Man. 2. In ancient mythology Cerberus was the many-headed dog who guarded the gates of Hades. 3. T. S. Eliot, in Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats. 4. Sir Isaac Newton, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Dorothy, in The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. 5. This is a relief of the age of sail, when sailors were punished by means of a nine-tongued whip, called a 'cat-o'-nine-tails', which left welts like the scratches of a huge cat. Since there was not enough room to swing a cat' below decks, the punishment was administered topside. 6. Golden retriever and Shetland sheepdog. German police dog (known in Britain as the German shepherd dog or Alsatian), chow and poodle. 7. Tobermory, in the short story of the same name by Saki (H. H. Munro). 8. They were trained to leap at a stag's genitals and rip them off. 9. Types of Siamese cats. Seal-points have a pale fawn coat, while blue-points have a grey one. Both types have darker ears, face, tail, and feet. 10. As Noel Coward said, 'Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun'.

Firsts and lasts

GRAFFITI in the form of words written on public buildings was written before Christ.

In Munich, Germany, there is a brewery that first started selling beer in 1397 — it is still selling it now.

A man called Samuel Morse was an artist who exhibited paintings in London in 1811. He is not known for his painting nowadays, but for the Morse code he invented in 1837.

England's first steam-powered warships was built in 1833.

'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' was the world's first horror film.

In 1801 the first true locomotive ran at Pen-y-darran. It transported seventy people 15 km to the Glamorganshire Canal.

The first crocus flower sprang from the blood of a boy in Greek mythology called 'Crocus.' He was playing a game with hoops with the god Mercury and was killed.

The last wish of the Indian ruler Khanjahan was to be buried in a conical tomb, and to have his hand extending out of it — so that he could continue his favourite pastime of shaking hands even after his death.

President Jimmy Carter was the first American president to be born in a hospital. The others were all born at home.

The first reason why there were 'best men' at weddings was that, in ancient times, a bridegroom set out to 'capture' his bride and always took a strong man along to help carry her off. Now all the best men carries is the wedding ring.

In many cities in Europe the first thing a doctor will prescribe to a patient who has had a stomach operation is champagne. Not all the patients can afford this ideal diet — so they eat beef broth instead!

In the last ten years of the nineteenth century the water supply in London was so limited that some of the more wealthy people's carriages were washed in champagne, wine being so plentiful.

The curse of the lost idol

THE next day, Annie and all other passengers (except for the nameless one) set off for the buried chamber.

Professor Pott led them off the boat along a dusty path into the desert. It was baking hot and Annie longed to stop at one of the refreshment stands beside the road. In the distance she saw some rocky hills and wondered how much further it was. She panted on, passing ruins on her left and an oasis on her right. Further on, they took a left turn and came to a building surrounded by fallen masonry. This was the Temple of the Moon God. Just beyond it was the entrance to the buried chamber.

Annie made the perilous descent down the rope ladder into the buried chamber. She gazed at the smooth, flat, walls covered in paintings. She was surprised by the soft sandy floor. Then she saw the idol — gleaming in the gloomy light. The Professor told everyone to stand back. Dr Boffin pulled out his magnifying glass and was

about to examine the idol when ... all of a sudden, the chamber was plunged into total darkness. Disembodied screams of shock rang out through the blackness. Annie could see nothing so she listened instead. She heard the Professor's voice and in the background there was a strange, scraping, digging sound. Suddenly, without warning, the light came back. All at once, Annie knew something was wrong ... very wrong. The idol was missing!

With a sickening jolt, Annie remembered the mystery message. Too late, Drusilla broke the awful silence with a wail and panic broke out as everyone rushed for the ladder. Annie thought fast. Was there anything she could do? There was only one thing. Hastily she took a few snaps with her Instamatic camera. Maybe they would contain clues that would lead to the thief.

At the top of the shaft everything was dark — not pitch black, but thick and murky. A vicious wind was blowing and Annie's skin was stung by sharp grains of flying sand. The wind had suddenly whipped up a fierce sandstorm.

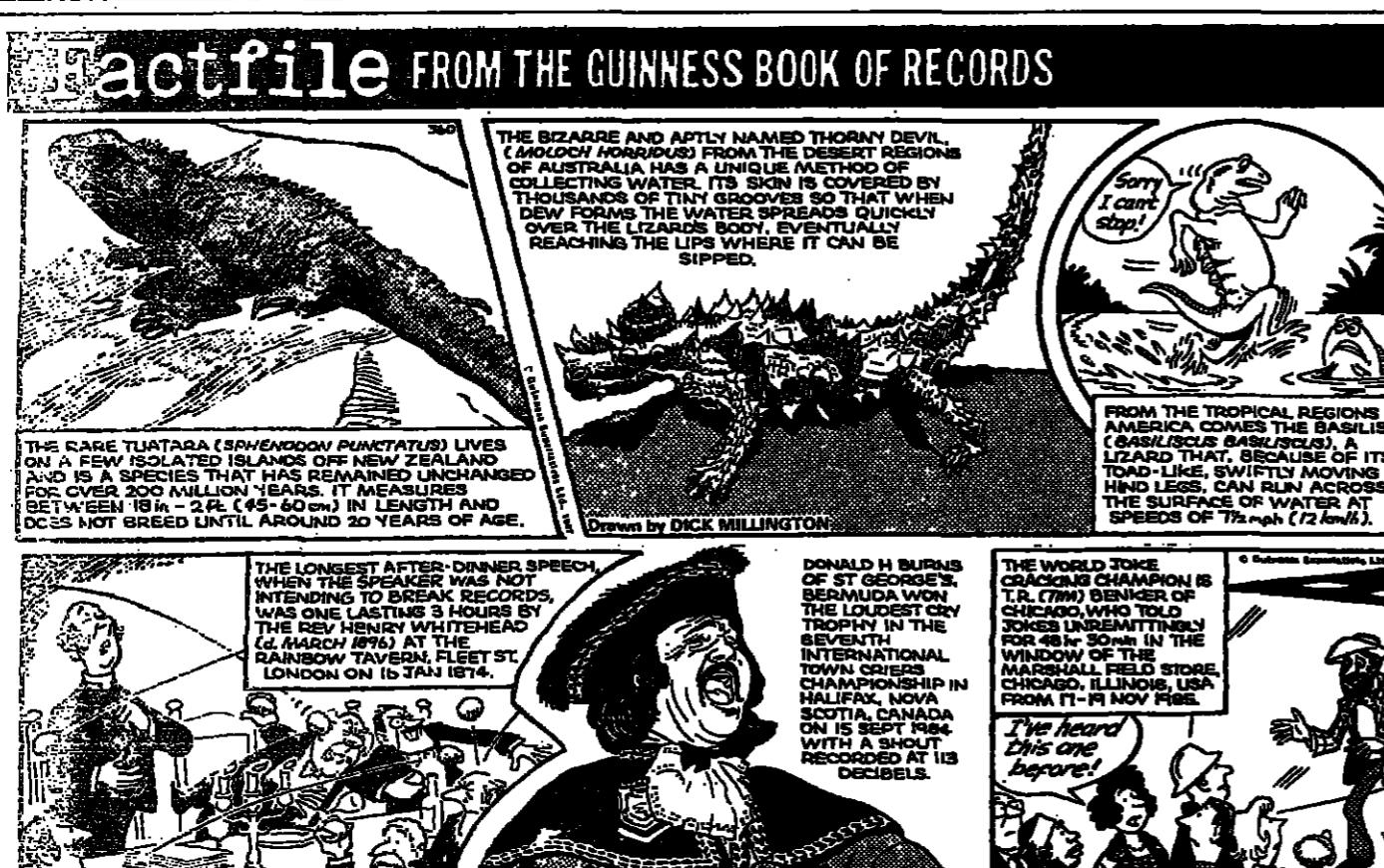
Annie could not see much — just a few shadowy figures. But she heard something that sent an icy shiver down her spine. Right next to her, a man and a woman were speaking in hoarse whispers. As she heard the man speak, she knew she was listening to the voice of whoever had stolen the idol. Both voices were familiar. They were passengers on the boat, but she didn't know exactly who they belonged to.

The thief said no more. Instead she heard the others, all talking at once. The Professor was urging everyone not to panic and Drusilla was wailing as usual. In addition, Annie definitely identified the voices of two other passengers. That left just four passengers.

Who are the possible suspects?

whose voice did Annie identify?

Who are the possible suspects?



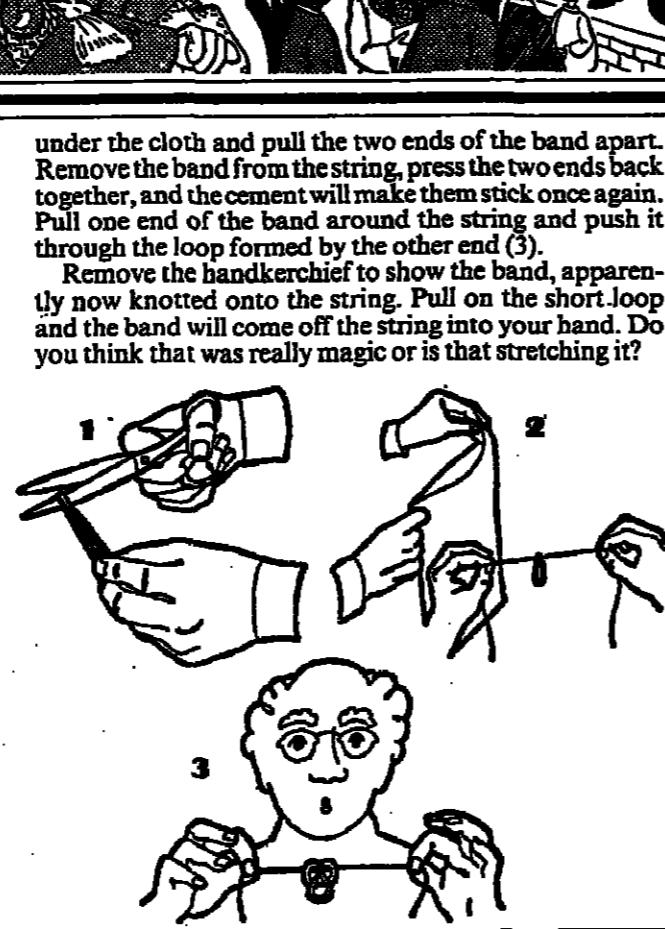
On and off

The illusion: Someone else threads a length of string through a rubber band, and holds both ends of the string very tightly. You cover the band with a handkerchief and make a few mysterious movements under the cloth. When you remove the handkerchief the band is now knotted around the centre of the string. Reaching over, you very gently pull on the band and it comes completely free of the cord.

The preparation: The one reason you are able to do the trick is the one thing your audience never suspects — the rubber band comes apart and goes back together.

Take a rubber band about two to three inches long and one-eighth of an inch wide and cut it through the centre of either end with a sharp pair of scissors (1). Now put a small dab of rubber cement on the cut surface of each end and let it dry. Stick the two ends firmly together so you don't see any crack where it's been cut. Have ready a piece of string about two feet long and a handkerchief and you're all set.

The trick: Hand one end of the string to someone, thread the rubber band onto it, and give the person the other end of the string, too. As he holds the string stretched between his hands, cover it with the handkerchief (2). Now reach



under the cloth and pull the two ends of the band apart. Remove the band from the string, press the two ends back together, and the cement will make them stick once again. Pull one end of the band around the string and push it through the loop formed by the other end (3).

Remove the handkerchief to show the band, apparently now knotted onto the string. Pull on the short loop and the band will come off the string into your hand. Do you think that was really magic or is that stretching it?

The curse! The curse! The ancient gods have sent this storm to curse us all.

H-h-he-help. I d-d-don't like s-s-sandstorms.

What have you got it in? No. Where is it? Shhhh! tell you later.

It's all right ... Deva ... panic! It's just a sandstorm ... Keep calm ... Follow me.

Drusilla.

Annie heard her wailing as usual, just as she did in the chamber.

Terry Trubble.

It's all right ... Don't panic! ... It's just a sandstorm ... Keep calm ... Follow me.

Luigi Macaroni.

It's all right ... Deva ... panic! It's just a sandstorm ... Keep calm ... Follow me.

Luigi Macaroni.

It's all right ... Deva ... panic! It's just a sandstorm ... Keep calm ... Follow me.

Luigi Macaroni.

It's all right ... Deva ... panic! It's just a sandstorm ... Keep calm ... Follow me.

Luigi Macaroni.

ARAB TIMES Classifieds

MARKET PLACE

ACCOMMODATION

Wanted

FARWANIYA, Khetan, Kuwait City. Share one room in a 2 bedroom flat near bus route. With a meal for RC Mangalorean bachelor with a Mangalorean or Goan couple/family. Tele. Fernandes 4813465. (AT2-40366-3)

Available

FARWANIYA, (near Holiday Inn). Single room for a working girl to share with a small Indian family. Bus 21, 22, 39, 41. Rent KD30. Tele. 2444654. 8 am - 12 noon. (AT2-40364-3)

KEIFAN, Block 4, House 41, Ibn Hisam St. Accommodation for an Indian R.C. bachelor to share with another bachelor. Rent KD 25. Tele. Louis. 4847165. (AT4-40338-3)

SALWA, House 196, Block 7. Behind Iran shop. Two rooms with kitchen, water and electricity for family/bachelors to share with an Indian family. Rent KD 50. 30. Tele. 5611243. (AT1-40354-6)

SHAMIYA, one CAC room, with a meal, for two Indian bachelors to share with another Indian bachelor. Rent KD55. Tele. 5612336. 10am - 12 noon only. (AT4-40335-3)

KUWAIT City, Sharq (near Fire Station). Sharing accommodation for a Keralite bachelor. Tele. 2443469 after 2 pm. (AT2-40368-3)

REMEMBER THE NUMBER 5624111

RAS Salhiya (behind Farah Restaurant, near cinema). One room for a single bachelor/working lady. Rent KD45. Tele. Janess. 5721684. 6 - 8 pm. (AT4-40342-3)

FIHAI (near cooperative). Two rooms with kitchen for families or working girls. Tele. Mr. Javid. 2546022, 2546213, 2546413. 8 am - 2 pm. (AT4-40320-3)

KUWAIT City, (opp. G.P.O.). One room with water, electricity and tele. for working girls or small family. Rent KD35 each. Tele. Mr. Gaikwad. 2415728. 3 - 11 pm. (AT4-40346-3)

For Rent

BENED AI Qar. Fully furnished ground floor flat; 2 bedrooms, dining and drawing room with tele. Available from 1,2,88. Contents of flat for sale. Rent KD190. Tele. 2543326. (AT4-40334-3)

SALWA, near Kuwait English School, deluxe CAC, new apartments consisting of 3 bedrooms, living and dining area, 2 bathrooms, large kitchen and balcony. Rent KD320. Tele. 5391720, 5382783. (AT1-40365-6)

FOR SALE

COMPLETE set of quality furniture for a one-bedroom flat. KD. 1000. Tele. 3947564, time 3.30 - 7 pm. (AT3-40312-6)

REMEMBER THE NUMBER 5624111

Al Saeed Cleaning
Washing houses, carpets, villas, buildings and offices.
Transportation of luggage, shifting, assembling of furniture and offices with warranty.
Tel. 4735507
4717963

Computers

PC XT (Panasonic FX600) 2FD (360), 640 memory, 8087-2 Math-Cop, graphic card, colour monitor (Panasonic), printer 240 C.P.S., 6 modes (Panasonic), like new. Tele. 2523121, after 3 pm. (AT3-40313-6)

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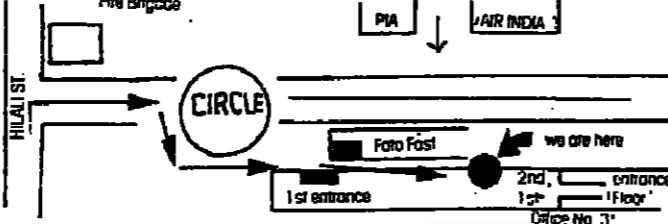
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SPORTS

Porto open four-point gap at top

LISBON, Dec 28. (Reuters): Porto strengthened their Portuguese Soccer League title challenge with an easy 2-0 home win against lowly-placed Penafiel yesterday to go four points clear at the top.

European champions Porto, who won the World Club soccer Championship in Tokyo two weeks ago, have 23 points and a game in hand over nearest rivals Benfica and Boavista, second and third respectively on 19.

Porto were without Algerian international striker Rabah Madjer — he has joined Spain's Valencia for six months before starting a three-year contract with Bayern Munich next July — but effectively settled the outcome in the first half.

The northern team seized the lead through a headed goal by striker Fernando Gomes in the seventh minute and extended their lead with another header, in the 38th minute, from Brazilian Celso.

Defence

Defending champions Benfica again disappointed their fans with a goalless home draw against Braga. The Lisbon side were thwarted by the well-organized defence of Braga, one of the lowest-place teams in the First Division.

Benfica's best chance came in the 50th minute when Swedish striker Mats Magnusson hit the bar.

Boavista beat Espinho 1-0 with a goal by Jorge Andrade in the 31st minute of their home clash to go level on points with Benfica.

Guimaraes, who won 3-0 at home to Farense, are in fourth place, five points behind leaders Porto.

Rush faces hefty fine by Juventus

TURIN, Italy, Dec 28. (Reuters): Welsh international striker Ian Rush, whose indifferent form with Juventus this season has been widely criticised in Italy, could face a hefty fine after he returns to work late for the third time this season.

Officials at the First Division club said Rush, who has scored only three League goals this season, had not returned from his Christmas break as arranged for training yesterday and had not informed the club he would be late.

A club spokesman said Rush appeared for a training session this morning.

Italian sports papers reported that Juventus director Giampiero Boniperti was furious and said he was likely to fine Rush five million lire (\$3,500).

"This time, Rush must justify himself to me," manager Rino Marchesi was quoted as saying. "I want to hear his excuses."

"Rush has an extended holiday, Juventus can't stand it any more," La Gazzetta Dello Sport said in a headline, adding that other players were making jokes about the Welshman, a prolific scorer with his former club Liverpool.

"He's a ghost — he's there but nobody can see him," one unnamed player was quoted as saying, echoing jibes made about Rush's recent weekly match performances.

"Maybe he's on leave again — like he is every Sunday," said another.

Courier brushes aside Cherkasov

MIAMI BEACH, Florida, Dec 28. (AP): Top-seeded Jim Courier of the United States dominated the Soviet Union's second-seeded Andrey Cherkasov 6-3, 6-2 yesterday to capture the boys 18 title of the Orange Bowl International Tennis Championships.

It was the second consecutive year the pair met in the championship round, with the same result.

Paradis shatters schoolgirl's dreams

BRISBANE, Dec 28. (Reuters): Petite Pascale Paradis shattered a schoolgirl's dreams at the Brisbane Women's Tennis Classic today in a fight to save her own career.

The 21-year-old Frenchwoman disposed of 15-year-old Australian Kerry-Anne Guse 6-2, 6-0 in just 35 minutes.

Guse, an Australian Junior Masters finalist, was a surprise wild-card entry and the second youngest Australian to make her international debut at the age of 15 years and 23 days.

But Paradis, a Federation Cup player, was unsympathetic as she worked to claw her way back to her career-best position of 25th in world rankings.

"I was playing so badly for nearly two years that I was thinking of giving it up," Paradis said afterwards.

OILERS CLINCH FINAL AFC WILD-CARD BERTH

49ers and Colts capture division crowns

NEW YORK, Dec 28. (AP): Wide receiver Jerry Rice and three running backs, veteran Eric Dickerson and rookies Alonzo Highsmith and Paul Palmer, set the final NFL playoffs spots yesterday.

Rice capped his record-breaking year with two touchdown passes to help lead the San Francisco 49ers to a 48-0 victory over the Los Angeles Rams and the NFC West Division title.

Dickerson rushed for 196 yards and scored twice to lead the Indianapolis Colts to a 24-6 victory over Tampa Bay and the AFC East title.

Performance

Charles White of the Rams won the NFL's individual rushing title with a 95-yard performance against the 49ers that gave him 1,374 yards for the season.

Highsmith scored the first two touchdowns of his NFL career as the Houston Oilers downed Cincinnati 21-17 and clinched the final AFC wild-card berth.

Palmer returned a kickoff 92 yards for a touchdown as Kansas City upset Tampa 20-17, giving the Denver Broncos the AFC West Division title.

Minnesota got the final NFC wild card when the Dallas Cowboys, with Herschel Walker scoring twice, beat the St Louis Cardinals 21-16.

In other games yesterday, it was Philadelphia 17, Buffalo 7; Detroit 30, Atlanta 13; New

Orleans 33, Green Bay 24; the New York Giants 20, the New York Jets 7; Denver 24, San Diego 0; and Chicago 6, the Los Angeles Raiders 3.

The regular season was to wind up this evening with New England at Miami.

On Saturday, Washington edged Minnesota 27-24 in overtime and Cleveland defeated Pittsburgh 19-13 to win the AFC Central title.

49ers 48, Rams 0

Rice finished the regular season with 23 touchdowns, 22 on receptions and one rushing. That left him one short of the NFL single-season record of 24 touchdowns set by Washington fullback John Riggins in 1983. He set League records with his 22 scoring receptions and also by catching touchdown passes in 13 consecutive games.

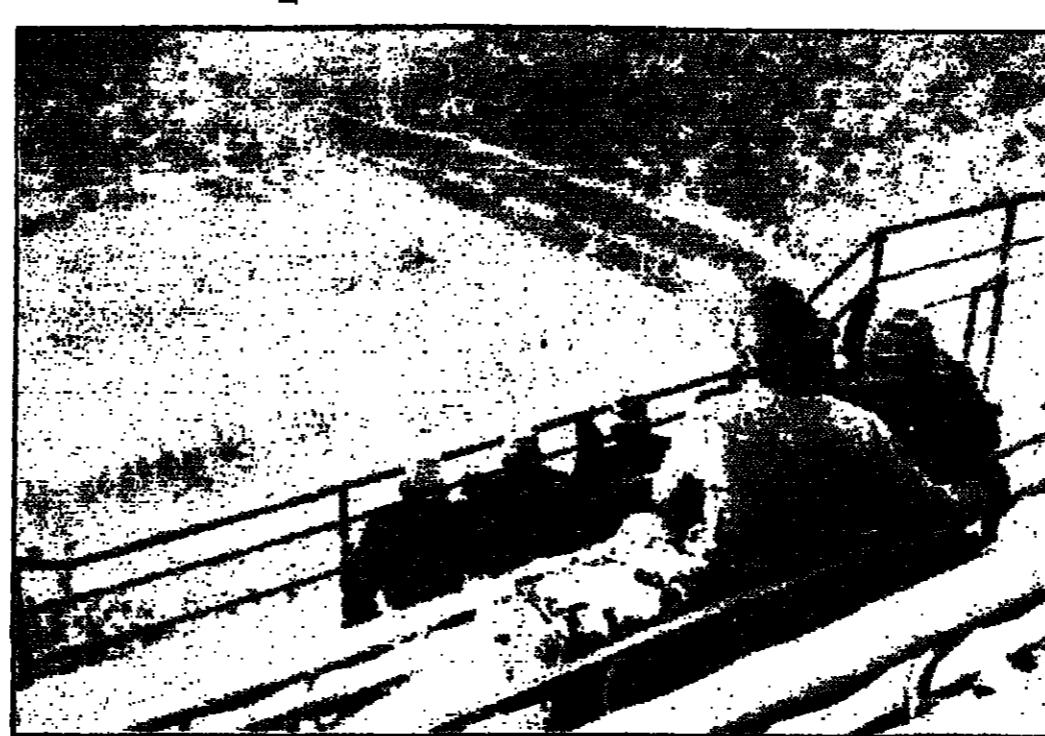
Colts 24, Bucs 6

Dickerson, whose midseason acquisition transformed Indianapolis into a serious contender, led the Colts to the AFC East title and their first playoff berth in a decade. Dickerson was supported by a defense that never let Tampa Bay inside its 20 and held the Bucs to two field goals.

Eagles 17, Bills 7

Highsmith, a contract holdout for the first eight games of the season, caught a 53-yard touch-

down pass from Warren Moon and ran one yard for another



Huddled together to keep warm, Broncos' fans watch their team battle Chargers during a driving snowstorm in Mile High Stadium. (Reuters radiophoto)

score. The Oilers, 9-6, last made

Chiefs 41, Seahawks 20

Palmer's 92-yard kickoff return highlighted a big-play day for Kansas City as the Chiefs dropped the Seahawks to 9-6 and forced them onto the road next week as a wild-card entry in the playoffs. Seattle's Steve Largent

caught the 751st pass of his 12-year career in the second quarter to surpass Charlie Joiner's all-time NFL record of 750.

Cowboys 21, Cardinals 16

Herschel Walker rushed for 137 yards, scored two touchdowns and played the perfect decoy for Steve Pelluer's game-deciding five-yard touchdown

run as Dallas killed St Louis' playoff hopes. The loss by the Cardinals gave the remaining NFC wild-card spot to the Minnesota Vikings.

Saints 33, Packers 24

Morten Anderson kicked four first-half field goals and Dalton Hilliard sparked a three-touchdown second half as New

Orleans closed out the team's most successful season with its victory over Green Bay.

Broncos 24, Chargers 0

Rookie Kevin Clark returned a punt 71 yards for a touchdown and the Denver Broncos, letting a blizzard protect their early lead, clinched the home field advantage throughout the playoffs by defeating San Diego.

Bears 8, Raiders 3

Kevin Butler's 30 yard field goal, his second three-pointer of the game, gave Chicago its victory over the Los Angeles Raiders and assured them of a home game in the NFC semifinals as the weekend of Jan 9-10.

Eagles 20, Bills 7

Randall Cunningham completed 16 of 21 passes for 177 yards and a touchdown and Keith Byars ran for 102 yards as Philadelphia capped its best season since 1981.

Giants 20, Jets 7

Phil Simms threw for two touchdowns as the New York Giants ended one of the worst seasons ever by a Super Bowl champion by defeating the New York Jets. In less than 12 months, the Giants, 6-9, went from NFL champions to last place in the NFC East.

Lions 30, Falcons 13

Gary Ellerson scored twice on short runs and Eddie Murray added three field goals to power Detroit over Atlanta. The Falcons finished the season with the worst record in the NFL.

Starlite and Unity triumph

STARLITE brushed aside Gulf Bank by seven wickets while Unity were made to struggle for their victory in the Al Khaleej Challenge Cup Thursday League matches in Almadi this week.

At the Oval, Gulf Bank after winning the toss and batting first were all out for only 124 in 24 overs. Ismail was the top scorer for the Bankers with 37.

The other batsmen, for Gulf Bank, to reach the double figures were Winston 19, Perwaiz 17, and Ajaz 14.

For Starlite, Sohail and Iftekhar took two wickets each while Qayyum and Maqbool got one each.

Arshad and Qayyum, on regular Starlite openers, put on 43 runs before the former was out for 34. Iftekhar and Qayyum then put on 57 runs for the second wicket. Qayyum was out for 30 but Iftekhar with 34 and Amjad 16 took Starlite past the victory target in the 21st over.

Openers

In the second game, a depleted Unity side opened their innings through Ejaz and Bader. Both the openers were in good form and put on 102 runs for the first wicket before Bader was out for 36.

Ejaz produced one of his best innings for Unity as he hit three sixes and four fours in his knock of 57. Dawood 24 and Baber 19 helped Unity reach 160 for five in 24 overs.

Deccan Green after losing the first two wickets for only 33 were given a boost by Salim Anwar and Aslam. Both these batsmen threatened to take the game away from Unity.

Salim hit 55 and Aslam 41 but after they were out, Deccan Green could only manage to score 156 for the loss of eight wickets when time was called. As Unity had scored 157 at the same stage, they were declared winners. Dawood and Ejaz took two wickets each while Chris and Bader picked up one apiece.

Madrid win

MADRID, Spain, Dec 28. (AP): Real Madrid won three-day, 26th Christmas basketball tournament after defeating the Soviet Union 99-95 (47-43) in the final game yesterday.

Earlier Greece won 80-59 (39-21) over Argentina in a game for third and fourth places.

A crowd of 12,000 watched the games at the Sports Palace.

Real Madrid topped the final standings with six points, followed by the Soviet Union with five, Greece with four and Argentina with three.

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Soviet delegation holds talks on Seoul Games



Gavrilin (right) is greeted by SLOC officials. (Reuters radiophoto)

SEOUL, South Korea, Dec 28. (AP): Soviet athletic officials held talks today with South Korean Olympic authorities in the strongest sign yet that Moscow will enter the 1988 Seoul Games.

Communist North Korea has threatened to call for a boycott unless it is made a co-host of the Games.

The International Olympic Committee and South Korea have rejected the North's and hope Soviet entry would forestall such a boycott. China is expected to compete in the Games.

Nations invited to enter the Olympics have until Jan 17 to formally accept. The Soviet Union is expected to announce its decision around Jan 15.

Korean officials said today they were keeping details of Park's talks with the Soviet secret because they did not want to provoke North Korea.

Driver killed in kart crash

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida, Dec 28. (AP): A 25-year-old man from Renton, Washington, was fatally injured yesterday when the go-kart he was racing crashed during practice for WKA's Enduro World Championships at Daytona international speedway.

James Kolman went off the course as he entered the infield portion of the 3.56-mile road course.

He was taken to Halifax Medical Centre, where he died a short time later.

It was the first fatality at Daytona International Speedway during the World Karting Association-sanctioned event.

NHL Games

NEW YORK, Dec 28. (Reuters): Peter Doohan was one of three surprise first-round casualties in the South Australian Open Tennis Championships today.

Doohan, a mid-year celebrity after besting West German star Boris Becker at Wimbledon, lost to American Bud Schultz 6-16-2.

Doohan, who won the event in 1983, said the new rebound ace artificial court surface had not played a part in his downfall.

"I don't think it would have made any difference to my game today playing on grass," he said. "It was just a bad day at the office. I never got started and he just kept hitting winners."

Turk Boyd added 15, Robyn Davis 14 and Eric Leckner 10 for Wyoming.

Eastern Kentucky guard Jeff McGill scored 21 points in the first game of the tournament to help send the Colonels into the championship game with a 67-55 win over Detroit.

The result was a 92-56 victory by No. 5 Wyoming in the opening round of the fifth annual tournament in the only game

Schultz sails past Doohan

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SPORTS

W. Australia
hammer
Sri Lanka

PERTH, Australia, Dec 28. (Reuter): Mark McPhee pulverised the Sri Lankan bowlers as Western Australia reached 484 for eight on the first day of their two-day cricket match here today.

McPhee scored a dazzling 131 from 129 balls and put on 201 for the first wicket with Greg Shipperd after Western Australia had won the toss and batted.

The run spree provided sweet revenge for the state side after they were beaten by Sri Lanka in a limited-overs match on Saturday.

Caught

McPhee, who was dropped when he had scored nine, took 124 minutes to reach his half-century but then unleashed a savage onslaught, his second 50 coming in 42 minutes of 30 deliveries.

He reached from 100 to 131 in a further 13 minutes before being caught on the long-on boundary.

Not only did McPhee slay the bowlers, but he also hurt the fielders. He hit Hashan Tillekeratne at short leg a nasty blow on the right arm and a姊妹 blow on the left arm, causing a severe damage to his fingers.

Tillekeratne and Gurusinghe spent the afternoon off the field but they hope to be fit to bat tomorrow.

Shipperd was stumped for 64 without any addition to the score but then Tom Moody, Wayne Andrews, Kim Hughes and Todd Breman continued the slaughter which did little to inspire confidence in the Sri Lankan attack five days before they face Australia in the opening match of the World Series Cup.

The most successful bowler was off-spinner Aravinda de Silva, who finished with four for 109 in 19 overs.

Scoreboard

WESTERN AUSTRALIA first innings:
G. Shipperd st De Alwis b P.A. de Silva 64
M. McPhee c sub b P.A. de Silva 131
Moody c Labrooy b P.A. de Silva 57
W. Andrews c Samarasakera b P.A. de Silva 70
K. Hughes c De Alwis b Samarasakera 70
T. Breman not out 46
T. Zocher c Kuruppa b Labrooy 1
C. Matthews c Kuruppa b Labrooy 1
Hogan c Amalean b Samarasakera 21
P. Capes not out 6
Extras (lb-4 nb-11 w-1) 16
Total (for eight wickets) 484
Fall of wickets: 1-201 2-201 3-310
4-341 5-412 6-425 7-431 8-467.

Bowling: Labrooy 18-1-85-2 (3ab), Ramanayake 21-0-92-0 (7ab), Amalean 14-2-111-1 (1ab), Samarasakera 13-0-69-2 (1w) P.A. de Silva 19-0-109-4, Ranaputra 4-0-14-0.

Climb abandoned

KATMANDU, Nepal, Dec 28. (AP): A four-member team from Tokyo has abandoned its effort to climb the 8,091-metre Mount Annapurna I, Nepal's Tourism Ministry said today. The ministry said the team had climbed to 6,100 metres on Dec 4 but was unable to go higher, and abandoned the climb on Dec 17.

Golf tourney

CORAL GABLES, Florida, Dec 28. (AP): Nicky Goetze of Hull, Georgia, fired an opening round 66 yesterday to lead the boys' division and his sister Vicki tied with Sandrine Mendiburu of Paris at 75 to top the girls' division of the Junior Orange Bowl golf tournament.

AUSTRALIAN LOWER ORDER WREST BACK INITIATIVE

Sleep and Dodemaide slam New Zealand

MELBOURNE, Dec 28. (Reuter): Peter Sleep hit 90 to mastermind a fightback by Australia's lower order and wrest the initiative from a lacklustre New Zealand side on the third day of the third and final Test.

At stumps today New Zealand were nought for no wicket after one over in their second innings. Australia had built a first innings lead of 40 after being dismissed for 357.

Blows

Sleep received excellent support from Greg Dyer, with 31, and Tony Dodemaide who was last man out after scoring 30 on his Test debut.

Dodemaide, playing on his home ground, built a record ninth-wicket stand for Australia against New Zealand of 61 with Craig McDermott, who struck several bouncy blows before being bowled by Danny Morrison for 33.

After yesterday's pyrotechnics from Richard Hadlee, the performance of the New Zealand bowlers was uninspiring. They were not helped by a lack of urgency in the field from a side needing to win this match to square the series.

Hadlee picked up the wicket of Sleep, plumb lbw, to register his 31st five-wicket haul in Test



Hadlee appeals for an lbw decision against Sleep. (Reuter radiophoto)

cricket and put him just five wickets behind the most successful bowler in Test history, England's Ian Botham, who has 373 scalps.

But the great paceman never really motored and captain Jeff Crowe quickly seemed to run out of ideas, often relying on 37-year-old Ewen Chatfield who, in 30 overs, never looked remotely like taking his first wicket of the series.

Dyer, unmoved by the con-

troversy surrounding his dismissal of Andrew Jones, reached 21 before being smartly run out.

Off-spinner Bracewell retrieved a straight drive off his own bowling and threw it to wicketkeeper Ian Smith. Dyer slipped while trying to turn and could not make his ground.

Sleep reached his third Test 50 and highest Test score of 65 in the second session while Dodemaide grew in confidence as the shine



Dodemaide evades a bouncer from Danny Morrison. (Reuter radiophoto)

left the second new ball.

The two had put on 80 when Sleep, who hit 62 in the second Test, was dismissed following Hadlee's return to the attack.

Dodemaide played second fiddle to McDermott and was lucky to survive a clear stumping chance when just short of his 50, one of the many errors committed by the New Zealanders.

However, Smith soon made up for it with a lunging catch to

Jahangir and Qamar to play in Kuwait



Jahangir: top player

Kahangir and Qamar to play in Kuwait

SOME of the world's top squash players will be seen in action in Kuwait next month when the 4th Asian Squash Championships start on Jan 20.

So far the participation of two of these players, Pakistan's Jahangir Khan and Qamar Zaman, has been confirmed by the local squash authorities.

Jahangir, who remained unbeaten for 5 1/2 years before losing his world No. 1 ranking to compatriot Jansher Khan, is trying to regain the form which once made him invincible.

Qamar, once a major force to contend with still ranks among the world's top players. Jansher's participation in this event has yet to be confirmed but even without him Pakistan will still be the clear favourites.

15 countries, besides Kuwait, so far confirmed their participation but the total is expected to rise to 18.

Completed

The Kuwaiti Squash Federation, headed by Sheikh Fahd Saad Al Abdala, has almost completed the preparations for the championships. Sheikh Fahd, in a meeting held recently, stressed on the importance of holding such events for Kuwait and the Arab world.

Meanwhile, the secretary-general of the federation, Sulaiman Al Randi, has sent invitations to senior sports officials to attend this event. He said that the matches would be played on four courts including the Al Arabi Sports Club, where the opening and closing ceremonies will be held.

The Kuwait TV will show all the matches live.

ARAB TIMES, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1987

Kifco rout Bright Star for final

KIFCO reached the final of the Al Arabi Cricket Trophy with a six-wicket victory over Bright Star at the KCL ground on Friday.

Bright Star elected to bat first and put on 161 runs for the loss of eight wickets. Only Salim (38) and Nadeem (30) could face the Kifco bowlers with any confidence.

For Kifco, Shahid Pervez captured three wickets for 28 while Shehzad got two for 23 and Rifaat two for 33.

Kifco started their innings on a solid note through Nasir and Zahid hit 55 and 49 runs respectively. Azam and Aqeed then took the score to 143 before the latter was out for 17.

Kifco reached the target for the loss of only one more wicket in the 27th over. They will now meet Evergreen in the final on Jan 4, 1988.

The tournament is being organised by the Kuwait Cricket League.

SPORTS BRITAIN

World Cup

MUNICH, West Germany, Dec 28, (AP): West German organisers today postponed a Nordic combined World Cup ski competition and said that three Alpine World Cup events may be cancelled due to lack of snow. The Nordic combined event in Schonach, originally scheduled for Jan 2-3 was postponed until Jan 5-6, weather permitting.

Grand National

CHEPSTOW, Wales, Dec 28, (AP): Playschool, a New Zealand bred gelding ridden by Paul Nicholls, held off a challenge from Rhyme 'n Reason to win the £25,000 (\$45,000) Welsh Grand National today.

Canada win

MOSCOW, Dec 28, (AP): Adam Graves and Theoren Fleury scored less than two minutes apart in the third period to take Canada to 4-2 victory over Czechoslovakia today at the World Junior Hockey Championships.

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